

### **1) How are the work placements organised?**

The schools participating in the Programme are expected to involve as many employers as possible in job shadowing and in the activities aimed at gaining work experience. The objective is to introduce students to six or more jointly selected job categories so that they can get an impression of a wide range of working environments. To this end, the schools can build upon their existing relationships with businesses, but they are also expected to enlarge their networks to ensure that they can offer opportunities for gaining work experience in any selected job category. Under the Programme, a resource book called *Networking – But How?* has been published to support these activities. Naturally, the available opportunities are greatly influenced by the schools' local conditions. This means that schools located in different parts of the country are able to maintain relationships with different numbers of businesses, but each school ensures that their students can visit several workplaces during the school year and tries to invite local entrepreneurs into the classroom.

### **2) How are the portfolios used and what forms of formative assessment are applied?**

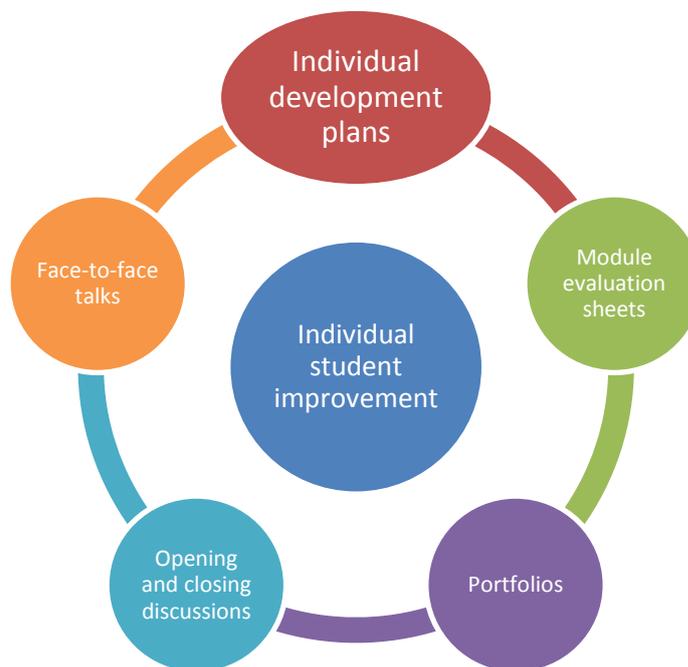
The Programme was launched with a clear determination to apply non-traditional forms of assessment in the preparatory ninth year of education (the Dobbantó class), i.e. to avoid marking student performance. Already in the preparation phase, the practical implementation of this principle highlighted a number of issues, including legal ones (e.g. How to close the school year? What should the certificate contain? etc.). Teachers were also better used to applying forms of summative assessment. The first school year of the Programme made it clear that teachers struggled with the use of assessment supporting progress at individual pace, whose main objective is to help individual improvement, and not to measure the achievement of external standards or requirements. The Dobbantó Programme applies a system of formative assessment which consists of the following closely interrelated components:

- *Personal development plans* (PDP) used for the three-monthly assessment and analysis of progress made by each individual student in a limited number of key fields of competence. A PDP helps to reconsider learning outcomes and learning plans on a regular basis, and therefore it is an important means of student reflection – and learning self-reflection – instead of being merely a document that records achievements and the objectives for development to be achieved in the next phase.
- *Evaluation sheets* helping students to summarise their thoughts about what has been learned upon closing a unit of the curriculum to be covered.
- *Portfolios*, which are developmental portfolios and used as a source of formative assessment for students. Portfolios are used to record the development objectives defined by the students, a contract in some cases, the student's PDP, and the student's works and reflections made in the course of working with the modules. Working with their portfolios requires students to actively document their own learning processes, evaluate their own and their peers' products based on a given set of criteria, and define their own objectives in consideration of their reflections with the teacher. In other words, the focus is on the process, and not on the outcomes.
- *Opening and closing discussions*. Each day begins and ends with a whole group discussion, which provides an opportunity for jointly planning a day or a longer

period, identifying individual tasks, and summarising and evaluating the results or experiences of a given day/period.

- *Face-to-face talks*. Students have weekly talks with the teachers who provide them individual support. These are good opportunities for giving individual feedback, exploring personal problems in more depth, or making so-called contracts for a specific issue or evaluating the performance of such contracts (which may also be done during the closing discussions).

Figure 1: The system of assessment applied in the Dobbantó Programme



Encouraging and helping student self-assessment play a key role, as it is essential for students to understand where they started from, how they can improve, which direction they should take, and what they could achieve. This kind of assessment can help students to become aware of the reasons of their failures and successes and to learn how to set objectives for themselves. The programme intends to support the institutionalisation of formative assessment, as an approach, by firstly giving a written – formative type – feedback to all school reports and teacher products, and secondly by including this topic into the training agenda of the school leaders. Where school leaders use a formative approach to assess the teachers’ work, formative assessment can sooner become part of classroom practice.

### 3) **What is the relation between the Dobbanto students and the mainstream students?**

Dobbantó students attend a preparatory zero year of secondary school (or a ninth year of education). From the outset, this has been considered to be a potential danger of segregation, especially because many members of the target group experienced exclusion earlier, and that experience may have also contributed to their dropping out of school. The Programme attempts to mitigate this real risk by making both school leaders and teachers aware of this problem, encouraging them to separate the

Dobbantó students from the mainstream students as little as possible. In many schools, the Dobbantó students join school events and are accepted as full members of the school community. In other schools, however, the Dobbantó classroom is physically separated from the rest of the school, and the Dobbantó students are not welcome to participate in school events. While some resistance on the part of non-Dobbantó teachers and certain school heads was anticipated, it has turned out to be stronger than expected. Apparently, placing disadvantaged students with a track record of difficulties into a better than usual classroom environment may cause envy in some teachers, which may lead to a negative attitude toward the participating students and colleagues. By now, it has become clear that the Programme is accepted and supported stronger by the staff of those schools whose leaders promote it and facilitate the sharing of the Dobbantó approach and pedagogical toolkit (e.g. teamwork, modules, formative assessment) with the non-Dobbantó teachers. Segregation has been a real issue, but more at the level of teachers than that of students.

#### 4) Evaluation outcomes

##### a) EVALUATION OF PROGRAMME RESULTS

*Executive summary of the evaluation of Semester 4  
made by Qualitas T&G  
on 28 February 2011*

##### *Objective of evaluation*

The main objectives of the evaluation of the Dobbantó Programme is summarised as follows:

- ensuring accountability for the use of public funds;
- ensuring professional accountability;
- providing data and information for ongoing reflection;
- informing the Programme Manager, the Professional Advisory Board and the Programme Office on the operation of the Programme; enabling the presentation of the achieved results and changes; and providing input for the corrections to be made to the process of development.

1) External evaluation can ensure accountability for the use of public funds essentially by providing information on whether or not the programme follows the initially defined direction and works toward the achievement of the objectives identified in the project plan. ***In the light of the objectives, the Programme seems to be operating as planned, and the feedback given by those performing the activities confirms the coherence between the plans and the operations. The Programme has been integrated in the operation of nearly all of the participating schools.***

2) Professional accountability – the organisation of work during the programme, the perceived impact and outcomes of the work done so far – can be analysed on the basis of the detailed feedback given by the stakeholders. In this field again, the received feedback provides clear confirmation that ***the Dobbantó has led to highly perceptible, significant changes and improvements in the examined target group. Naturally, each school has a different attitude to change and has reached a different level of improvement. Some local authorities refer to the professional work done in the Dobbantó school as a model to be followed by the other schools administered by them.***

3) Providing data and information for ongoing reflection – the data and information collected in the course of the external evaluation of the Programme enable the participants to have a realistic picture of all levels of operation, from the individual experiences of the teachers of a given school to the common organisational features of the schools involved in the Programme. ***The skills and capacity of self-reflection show great variation at both the individual and the organisational level. External evaluation is like action research in the sense that it aims at contributing to the improvement of the process, and its outcomes should help the implementation of the Dobbantó objectives or the corrections required to the achievement thereof. According to the outcomes of the evaluation, no significant change can be seen in some fields, such as the division of work, where the detected issues have not been resolved. However, there are many good examples of an optimum level of openness leading to such changes in a given organisational unit that have proved to be conducive to the operation of the Programme. Such changes include the reorganisation or renewal of teams in some schools by admitting new members who are even more committed and open to the Dobbantó approach.***

4) Informing the Programme Manager, the Professional Advisory Board and the Programme Office on the operation of the Programme; enabling the presentation of the achieved results and changes; and providing input for the corrections to be made to the process of development – ***building upon the examined data, our report demonstrates that the Dobbantó Programme continued to operate effectively in the first half of the second school year.***

#### *Evaluation methods*

The methods and techniques applied for the evaluation were the following:

<b>Applied method</b>	<b>Target group, organisation</b>
Questionnaire (to be completed online)	Heads, team leaders, teachers, mentors and educoaches
Interviews	Programme Manager

The applied questionnaires contained the same sections as the ones used for the second measurement, as well as a number of new ones. In addition to the traditional method (based on questions) an image-based test was also used in the attitude test (SST), and our examination was also extended – following the buoys – to some of the changes and achievements, as well as the efforts taken to those ends. These gave us a complex but at the same time clear view of the outcomes and effects of the Dobbantó Programme.

The analysis places emphasis on the organisational features of the schools participating in the Programme (trust, relationships, commitment, climate, attitude to change). Similarly, emphasis is placed on the attitude of the teachers implementing the Programme to the process, the motivations behind their participation and the methods applied by them. Finally, the report analysis the impacts and outcomes perceived by the participants and implementers, as well as their use in the Programme.

### *Characteristics of the participating schools*

The schools participating in the Dobbantó Programme show overall improvement compared to the previous measurements. The results suggest that the Programme is working successfully. The team members are highly committed to the Programme, they have developed a sense of ownership about the personalised pedagogical approach of the Programme and work accordingly.

The team members are of the opinion that their schools have become better functioning organisations, but the overall results remain behind those of the first measurement. According to our results, none of the schools had any organisational deficiencies which may have jeopardised the operation of the Programme. The new ways of operation have been integrated into the organisation of the schools, and the operation of the schools is well-balanced, although it could be further improved by achieving a better division of work.

In the course of the Programme, the uneven division of work has proved to be a problem that the schools are unable to handle successfully at the local level. Considering that the division of work is a constant problem in nearly all of the schools, it is deemed to be worth reconsideration at the level of programme management, as the adequate solution is likely to be intervention at the level of strategic planning.

The schools follow highly varied improvement paths, because they are very different from one another. The gradually improving results of organisational evaluations suggest that, as the Programme progresses, the schools will slowly reach the optimum where the new ways of working are integrated into their operation. There are and will be schools that can cope increasingly better after overcoming the initial difficulties, while others will not perform that well.

Our study of the organisational climate focused on the existence of an “open school” approach. To this end, we looked at two factors: unity and team spirit. The Dobbantó Programme heavily relies on cooperation among the members of the system, and the team members must collaborate closely in their everyday work, for example in team teaching, where such collaboration is essential and indispensable.

The responses of the teacher teams imply a strong team spirit and a partnership based on accepting and respecting others, which acts as a source of energy in daily practice. The leaders are attentive to the team members, and they are proud of the achievements of their colleagues.

Our studies have shown that the heads of the schools perceive the least absence of unity, whereas team spirit is seen to be the strongest by the mentors. These results are considered to be of key importance, as the mentors could gain a lot of insight while working with the teams over the last one and a half years. They are those participants who should support the individual development of the teachers by giving them personal attention and advice. As working groups, the teams are supposed to provide the students with a model in more than one way. Firstly, the students see them as groups of 5 to 9 people each of whom has different personalities and specific roles in the work done jointly. Secondly, team teaching is done in pairs in the classroom, where the members act in many respects differently from those of a larger group.

It should be noted that the respondents believe that the schools have ethos. Teachers have an exceptionally positive attitude to teaching and they show the type of commitment which is necessary for the differentiated and personalised treatment of the young people defined as the Programme's target group. Regarding the attitude to special educational needs, the teachers and the team leaders share the opinion that a lot can be learned from working with special needs students and that teaching methods should be adjusted to the special needs of such students. They find it important to talk to the students' parents as often as possible, and believe that the responsibility for recognising the existence of special educational needs lies with the teachers.

The Dobbantó Programme provides schools with opportunities for improvement in multiple levels and fields, i.e. in a very complex manner. We assessed the schools' ability to exploit these opportunities by looking at, for example, their attitude to change in specific areas of operation, including self-evaluation, planning, inclusion, improvement, coordination and organisation of work, and leadership.

The overall results of the fourth measurement show a tendency of either stagnation or slight improvement. This is because at the end of the first semester of the second school year there are still a few schools that have not been able to fully overcome the difficulties arising from the rolling out and running of the Programme.

The fourth measurement has further confirmed the outcome that the schools endeavour to manage changes at the highest level possible, and the opinion about these changes has also improved. As regards satisfaction with the various areas, the opinions within the schools show more differences due to the different experiences, tasks and responsibilities of the respondents, arising from the fact that teachers and heads have insight into different areas of operation.

As the heads of the schools tend to have an unambiguously positive view of all areas, their average opinion tends to be much better than that of the two other groups (teachers and team leaders). It is considered worth analysing the factors and personal experiences behind this phenomenon.

The importance of self-reflection by schools needs to be re-emphasised, as it is a key to their becoming capable of improvement and of addressing in a different and more effective way the problems arising inevitably in the course of operation.

The heads' leadership competences improved a lot in the pilot year, according to the assessment given by the educoaches, which was better in respect of all competences – except three (decision-making, focus on results, motivation) – than the assessment the heads gave to themselves. The preceding evaluation period showed an opposite pattern.

What makes it especially important is that the heads also reported much improvement in leadership theory, although they have not mastered these competences at such level which would allow them to apply these competences automatically in their daily work. In particular, the heads of large integrated schools have so many management tasks that they find it difficult to also function as educational leaders, which latter they deem necessary.

Normally, such a complete change of mindset would take a longer time. Unfortunately, the school leaders only had three coaching sessions to support their improvement this year, which was apparently not enough for all of them to improve their practical leadership skills. It should also be

noted that there are some schools where the educoach has been unable to build with the head the relationship required for a coaching process over the last semester. On the other hand, there is a school where the old head has been replaced, and the new head expressly asked for this kind of leadership support, which has of course been ensured by the Programme Office.

As regards the improvement of the teaching staff, the teaching practice relies on projects and cooperative methods in supporting the learning process. Consequently, the participants of the Programme believe that the teacher's role is mainly to provide sources of learning. The school based assessments of students have shown in two fields that the project method can bring more favourable results than the traditional teaching methods.

The view of teachers reflects the Dobbantó approach and objectives, because all three groups believe that teachers should evaluate the improvement of skills and the process of learning. Considering the success of the Programme, this is a key result, because the direction and the depth of the change of mindset in teachers are indicative of the depth of transformation and learning generated by the Programme.

The curriculum development work did not stop last year. Based on the feedback, the modules have been further improved and made easier to be covered and learned by the students in this school year. The student-centred approach and the focus on the students' individual learning processes have not lost any intensity since the launch of the Programme, which shows that the objectives set under the Dobbantó Programme have gained ownership at all levels.

The study of the teachers' attitude to Dobbantó has proved that the participants have an unambiguously positive view of the Programme and the related key factors. On the other hand, it should be noted that their view of the Programme as a whole and their own performance in it has shifted to a somewhat negative direction. The most important change is a growing fear associated to certain components of the Programme. It is deemed important to emphasise that none of the study findings indicate a strong fear. Consequently, the teachers' work is not impeded by a strong fear triggered by new tasks or challenges in any field. This is supported by the finding that the highest level of satisfaction comes from the teachers' self-assessment, and the satisfaction in teaching has also improved compared to the previous measurement.

The analysis of the impact of the Dobbantó Programme – based on the teachers' responses – clearly confirms the effectiveness of our originally conceived development / instruction model based on an in-depth knowledge of the students.

The Dobbantó Programme makes perceptible impact on the school as a whole: in other words, its impact has not been limited to the participants of the Programme, and it has also been spreading among those teachers of the schools who are not teaching the Dobbantó classes. The answers suggest that the Programme has also extended beyond its original framework, as the teachers have begun to apply the acquired Dobbantó skills in other aspects of their work at the school, and the acquired Dobbantó skills have motivated teachers to learn and use additional skills.

The professional commitment and improvement of the schools are also demonstrated by the initiative of one of the Dobbantó schools, i.e. the organisation of an Arts and Science Conference for Dobbantó Students, which was attended by the students of eight Dobbantó schools.

The participants of the Programme use new methods and activities in their work, and make an influence on the work of other teachers through internal communication. Also, the impact on the organisation as a whole is already identifiable in some cases, which proves that the expectations from the Programme have been met, as far as the sustainability of operation is considered. The impact of the Programme was highly visible at the regional meeting of Dobbantó schools held in Miskolc, whose agenda included the interaction between the Dobbantó Programme and the other programmes run by the schools, including inter-programme learning.

The synthesis of the analyses shows that a dominant majority is clearly satisfied with the outcomes. The schools and the Dobbantó Programme have mutually impacted on each other and both have undergone considerable improvements. The width and depth of organisational learning differs from school to school, but the Programme Management may foster the learning process on an individual basis, adjusted specifically to the possibilities and needs of the schools in the last semester of the Programme. Since each school shows an individual pattern of improvement, it is considered worth collecting and analysing the good practices and solutions developed by the schools with a view to providing a kind of synthesis of the outcomes of the process. These two tasks would be particularly useful in the semester ahead, and this report supports the implementation thereof.

#### **b) MONITORING THE PROGRAMME AS AN IMPROVEMENT PROCESS**

*Executive summary of the **final** monitoring report  
made by Tárki-Tudok Tudásmenedzsment és Oktatáskutató Központ Zrt.  
on 1 September 2011*

##### *Methods*

In the monitoring process, equal emphasis is given to quantitative (questionnaire based) and qualitative methods. This is necessary partly because the latter can provide more flexibility, enable the exploration of unexpected phenomena, and may be modified in the field, and partly because in action research (like in any innovative programme), the volatility of the subject of monitoring makes it impossible to gain adequate information from a limited number of arbitrary measurements.

The professional monitoring of the Dobbantó Programme is based on a joint and complementary application of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

##### *Activities*

Monitoring activities follow the approved Monitoring Plan, with the head of the monitoring research being responsible for implementation. The Head of Research is required to submit to the Project Manager three reports summarising the monitoring results related to each phase of the Programme. In addition, the Head of Research must immediately notify the Programme Manager upon considering that intervention into the Programme may be necessary on the basis of the monitoring data or any other sources.

While the **monitoring reports are not public documents**, the Programme Manager may, at her own discretion, disclose them to those professionals who may find the information therein relevant to their work.

At the beginning of each of the three monitoring phases, the Head of Research and the Programme Manager discuss previous experiences, including the outcomes of the external evaluation. As far as

possible, the concrete plan for the next phase, including the finalisation of the specific instruments and techniques to be applied, must be agreed on by taking into account the opinions and information needs of the Programme participants.

## Overview

The following section provides an overview of the effectiveness criteria of the Programme. Some of the criteria are specifically related to the previous phases of the Programme. In these cases, the data under Point I come from Phase One, and the data under Point II come from Phase Two.<sup>1</sup> All other data were collected in Monitoring Phase Three.

Monitoring is expected to answer the following questions:

### 1. Do the teachers participating in the Programme receive adequate support to be able to assist effectively the progress of Dobbantó students?

<p>Did the participating teachers receive adequate training on theory to prepare for the Programme?</p>	<p>On the occasion of our last visit, each school reported that their teachers had learned a lot in this Programme and emphasised the role of the regional meetings.</p> <p>II. No teacher complained that the resource materials and the training opportunities had been inadequate.</p> <p>I. Two thirds of the teachers considered the preparatory training completely satisfactory. One third of them replied that some of their questions remained unanswered.</p>
<p>Did they have access to good practices?</p>	<p>The regional meetings provide opportunities for exchanging experiences with other schools. The teachers find that these are the most useful parts of the regional meetings.</p> <p>I. All of the teachers had access to good practices which they intend to apply.</p>
<p>Do they find the resource materials satisfactory?</p>	<p>In Monitoring Phase One, all teachers were either partly or fully satisfied; none of them reported to be unsatisfied with the resource materials received in that phase.</p> <p>In Phase Two, half of the schools had problems with the modules.</p> <p>In Phase Three, only technical issues arose, and hardly any substantial problems were reported.</p>
<p>Can they apply the proposed solutions and teaching methods in practice?</p>	<p>All teachers tested at least one teaching method successfully. 75% of the teachers mentioned teamwork, 50% mentioned teaching in pairs. In the previous Monitoring Phase, the teachers' products contributed to the improvement of</p>

<sup>1</sup> The first monitoring report was made upon the closing of the preparation phase, on 15 October 2009, and the second was submitted after the end of the first school year, in October 2010.

	reflective skills.
Do the tools used to diagnose students upon entry meet the schools' requirements? Can they use these tools for individual development? Do they find these tools helpful?	In the second year, everybody could use a very simplified version of the PDP. II. There were only three schools among the 15 participants that did not use any form of measurement at the beginning of the school year. Most teachers found some form of testing subject knowledge, literacy or numeracy skills necessary and used them in September.
Are the teachers able to develop approaches which can actively contribute to the prevention of early school leaving?	The teachers are right in thinking that their personality and relationship with the students may be an important factor of preventing dropping out. This is also shown by their concerns about the following year, in which the young people will have to cope without the support of their "partner" in the teacher team. II. The teachers are of the opinion that patience is needed in the first place. In this respect, they can learn from one another, and therefore they find working in a team very useful.
Is their professional confidence growing? Are they capable of conscious prevention?	Professional confidence is best increased by positive feedback received from external sources (teachers of other schools, mentor) or by seeing that others also face the same problems.
Are the teachers able to use the Dobbantó Programme Package for Competence Development (hereafter: "DPCD")? What is their opinion about the DPCD? What are the results of using it?	II. 85% of the schools are able to use the modules as intended. The remaining 15% use them as a kind of curriculum to be covered on a compulsory basis, and therefore have problems with the modules. In the second school year, all schools reported to be able to select the right modules confidently or to replace them by their own teaching materials, where appropriate.
Are the teachers prepared for using the programme packages? Have they received the necessary tools, and can they use them?	II. While not all the modules were available at the time of beginning the school year, the schools had received all resource materials needed to start work on September 1. The schools did not receive the revised modules on schedule, and even more complaints were caused by not receiving the accompanying CD-ROMs. None of the schools received the competence cards, although they did not complain about it, which was probably because they did not know what the competence cards should be used for. We are not aware of any lasting problems relating to the use of any of the tools received.
Are the teachers able to organise learning in a differentiated manner in the classroom? Can they use adaptive techniques? To what extent	Every school mentioned that the Dobbantó class was so heterogeneous that it made frontal teaching impossible. Consequently, they apply

can they master or implement these? How do the students react to adaptive instruction?	differentiation or, as they called it, “face-to-face” instruction.
Is the relationship between students and teachers cooperative and supportive?	There are no objective data available on the quality of the student-teacher relationship, but our personal impressions were good. In one of the groups, the students claimed that getting to know their class teacher had been the best thing about the year. Teachers feel truly responsible for the future life of their students. II. Upon being asked about their own experience of success in the Dobbantó, all teachers tended to talk about the post-Dobbantó successes of their students, which can be considered indirect evidence of the quality of their relationship with the students.
Are the teachers able to implement team teaching?	Based on our personal impressions, team teaching was practiced very well in 6 schools, well in 7 schools, and poorly in one school. (In one of the schools, implementation could not be evaluated, because the team had ceased to exist by the end of the year.)
Can the teachers draft personal development plans in cooperation with the students?	The students were involved in the drafting of the PDPs in every school. With the exception of two schools, the parents were also often involved. On the other hand, it should be noted that none of the schools used the original PDP template in the second year.
Are the teachers really able to adjust the programme to individual learning needs by using the DPCD in a flexible manner?	They claim to be able to do so, and they increasingly supplement the programme by their own materials (and they are proud to show examples).
How do the teachers use the components of the DPCD in their daily practice?	II. They recall that they have been using the DPCD in all areas since the very beginning of the school year, i.e. they did not switch to using it gradually.  No regress was observed in the second school year.

## 2. Do the mentors provide adequate support to the teachers for implementing changes?

Do the mentors receive adequate support to be able to perform their duties? Are they prepared for their task properly?	I. All mentors participating in the focus group interview were fully satisfied with their preparation and perceived the support provided for their work adequate, with no gaps.
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	II. The mentors consider the support provided for their work under the Programme very good.
Do the mentors receive all the information and support needed for the performance of their work?	I. The general answer is yes, but there were two issues: like others, the mentors were informed of the delay in the Programme late, and many schools received that information from other sources and sometimes in contradiction to the official position of the Programme which was represented by the mentors. II. No such complaints were raised.
Do the mentors understand what their tasks and roles are?	II. Yes. They all claimed to be responsible for supporting the overall process in the schools and particularly for ensuring that the Dobbantó teachers are prepared for everything and anything as much as possible. Interestingly, many of them considered the retention of students as an indicator of their effectiveness.
Have the mentors built an adequate, supportive relationship with the teacher teams of the schools? Do the mentors provide a model of the role which the teachers are expected to play in their cooperation with the students?	Upon asked about the support received for the implementation of the Programme, most schools (10 out of 15) highlighted the role of the mentor. In all cases, the explanation was that the external view and outstanding professional expertise of a mentor could be a great help. II. The teachers described the relationship between the teacher team and the mentor very positively, ranging from fair through friendly and open to cooperative. This means that cooperation was virtually unanimously considered to be good in Monitoring Phase One. In Phase Two, while no open criticism was voiced, some of the responses were rather trite. Apparently, team leaders receive most of the support, and they are very grateful in all of the schools.
Is there adequate professional cooperation between the mentor and the educoach working with the same school?	II. Only one school reported a conflict between the mentor and the educoach, which was caused by the confusion about their roles (who should be responsible for what).

### **3. Is the improvement plan prepared by the schools for the Dobbantó Programme being implemented?**

Do the school leaders ensure the physical conditions needed for the implementation of the Programme?	The majority of the schools did not complain about the physical conditions, which most teachers were typically satisfied with. On the other hand, teachers in Békéscsaba had to fight with their school leaders on the occasion of
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	every single procurement in the second year.
Do the school leaders understand the Dobbantó concept? Are their diagnoses of the current situation and their improvement plans realistic?	<p>I. Half of the heads reported that their school had not had any problems with embracing the Dobbantó Programme and its improvement model.</p> <p>II. The schools should be divided in two groups. In large educational institutions, specific professional issues do not fall within the head's sphere of responsibility. Where the project leader is granted sufficient powers, professional leadership is not a problem. However, where it is not so, problems may arise (Öveges).</p> <p>By Phase Three, the head of one school had become openly hostile to Dobbantó, as a result of considering the Programme to be a threat to the school itself.</p>
How much support do school leaders provide to teachers for the application of new educational content and methods?	II. All of the respondent heads appreciated the work done by the teachers, whose workload has apparently increased as a result of joining the Dobbantó Programme. Teachers did not complain either, but their responses were less elevated, and most of them only expressed their awareness of the fact that their leaders ensure the necessary conditions and encouragement.
How can the schools cooperate with local partners?	Nearly all schools mentioned that personal contacts were needed to find job shadowing locations. The schools only reported to have lost locations that had gone bankrupt, and new contacts could also be made in the second year.
Is there any evidence of developing micro-regional cooperation among schools in order to retain students at risk of dropping out of the school system? Do the schools enter into cooperation agreements? In what fields and how do they cooperate with other schools?	There is no such evidence. On the other hand, many schools are involved in partnerships forged earlier, which continue to function without any cooperation agreement.
Are the schools (school leaders and teachers) aware that they represent the last stage where something can be done against early school	<p>Yes, they are, and many schools include it in their mission statements.</p> <p>"We are able to retain students who would drop</p>

leaving?	out of other schools.”
Is the reduction of the drop-out rate considered to be an evidence of professional success? Do the pedagogical programmes of the schools include any activities aimed at the prevention and reduction of early school leaving?	It is considered to be an evidence of professional success. The schools believe that the strongest evidence of success is when a student’s life becomes better. Teachers are most proud of such achievements.  (No data are available on the pedagogical programmes.)

**4. Do the school leaders receive adequate support to be able to treat the Dobbantó improvement plan as part of their school’s improvement efforts?<sup>2</sup>**

Do the educoaches receive adequate support for the performance of their duties? Have they received sufficient, adequate training for the task?	I. According to the educoaches, the received training provided them with the necessary foundations, and they could approach the target group in an appropriate manner.  II. The educoaches value and find necessary the regular monthly meetings (although one of them believes that it would be enough to organise such meetings less frequently).
Do the educoaches receive all the information and support needed for the performance of their work?	II. Yes, they do – and all respondents valued the support received from the Programme Office.
Do the educoaches understand what their tasks and roles are?	II. The educoaches claim to understand what their tasks and roles are, although one of them mentioned that it would be useful to better clarify and separate the roles of the various providers of support.
Do the school leaders understand the essence of educoaching and see the opportunities provided by it? Can they exploit those opportunities? Is there a proper relationship between the heads and the educoaches of the schools?	II. One school reported a problem, which was essentially personal in nature. The head did not find the support provided by the educoach assigned to the school appropriate, but the role of coaching remained unquestioned even in this

<sup>2</sup> As the role played by the educoaches was most important in the earlier period of the Programme, the data for the indicators also come from that period. It should be noted that only 6 of the 11 educoaches answered our questions, so our findings had to be based on their observations.

	<p>case.</p> <p>II. There is an ambiguity: while all heads value the educoaches positively, 4 educoaches do not think that the heads they work with accept their personality and/or advice.</p> <p>II. The educoaches' opinion has not changed since the previous period, i.e. they still think that making a difference (both in concrete terms and in the way of thinking) takes much more time and effort in the world of school than that of business. They did not experience any change in the heads' attitude.</p>
<p>Is there adequate professional cooperation between the educoach and the mentor working with the same school?</p>	<p>II. Only one school reported a conflict between the mentor and the educoach, which was caused by the confusion about their roles (who should be responsible for what).</p>

### **c) FOLLOWING UP THE SUCCESS OF FORMER DOBBANTÓ STUDENTS**

*The conclusions of the final study report made by Gallup Hungary on 1 September 2011.*

#### *Research methodology and tools*

The students' track record underlines the importance of personalised development. Any follow-up of their success after the Dobbantó Programme should also be built on a personalised approach. In this case, the size of the studied sample also made it necessary to apply personalised tools which can take into account the specific features of the age group and have a motivating effect. As a result of this approach, 87% of the young people involved in the study completed the 8-month follow-up period.

*ESM (Experience Sampling Method)* is a method applied in social and psychological studies. It focuses on current experiences and activities, and the cognitive and emotional reactions thereto, instead of recording final opinions or observing the subjects' reactions in non-realistic life situations. The essence of the applied method was that within the study period (from February 2011 to 10 June 2011), the persons participating in the study received signals through an electronic device (in this case a mobile phone) at random times based on a given algorithm to spend no more than two minutes on completing a questionnaire. Upon receiving the ESM signal, the students had to answer specific questions about their thoughts, feelings and activities at that moment. An ESM study is a bridge between an accurate survey and an environmental study. The ESM was used to study the

career of former Dobbantó students entering a training programme and the factors influencing their quality of life in comparison to their peers, used as a control group. This was supplemented by the interpretation of the responses in the context of the three major fields of study.

The students participating in the Dobbantó Programme in the school year of 2009/2010 (except 6 young people in employment) were asked to take part in *personal interviews*. Likewise, the teachers who were responsible for child protection in the schools were contacted in person. The young people involved into the control group completed the questionnaires with the help of the data collectors implementing the survey.

The class teachers were *interviewed by phone*. The same method was used to interview those young people who took up a job after completing the Dobbantó class and therefore could not participate in face-to-face meetings.

The leaders of the schools participating actively in the Dobbantó Programme were asked to take part in *focused interviews*. The aim of these interviews was to interpret the processes identified by an analysis of school documents and to explore the adequacy (coherence) of daily practice.

The control group, whose members were the students' current classmates, participated in a *group interview*.

The understanding and earlier measurements of the Programme and the existence of school processes impacting on Dobbantó students were examined *by analysing documents*. The questions used in the interviews with the school leaders and the questionnaires completed by the teachers who were responsible for child protection in the schools were based on the analysis of the schools' pedagogical programmes.

#### *The students involved in the study*

The first meetings with the students took place between 15 December 2010 and 15 January 2011. Following these initial talks, 126 students agreed in writing to participate in the study (including 114 participating in public education, 5 employed, and 7 who were neither working, nor participating in education or training). Final rejection was received in 4 cases. Another 15 students could be involved later, after contacting them by phone. Therefore, the final sample included 141 young people who completed the Dobbantó Programme in the school year of 2009/2010 (127 participating in public education, 6 employed, and 8 who were neither working, nor participating in education or training). The study lasted 8 months, and 87% of the young people completed it.

The current situation of former Dobbantó students can be described, among others, by what they do and how their days are spent. The table below shows these for the 191 students who completed the Dobbantó year:

Participating in public education <sup>3</sup>	127	66.5%
Employed	6	3.2%
Neither working, nor participating in education or training	8	4.2%

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<sup>3</sup> This category includes two students participating in adult training in the same school where they completed the Dobbantó class.

Refused to respond / were not available	50	26.1%
Total	191	100%

For the young people involved in the study (based on their declarations to participate):

Participating in public education	127	90.1%
Employed	6	4.2%
Neither working, nor participating in education or training	8	5.7%
Total	141	100%

The academic success of the target group was measured in comparison with a *control group* of classmates representing an additional view of school processes. The number of classmates involved in the focus group interview depended on the individual results of the questionnaires. The size of the target group made it possible to use the ESM with the same number of students in those classes where the number of former Dobbantó students was the highest. This also gave an insight into the given peer group's vision of the future and subjective quality of life.

The members of the control group were selected randomly from the classes included in the sample (where the number of former Dobbantó students was 2 or more). Of the 64 young people in the control group completing the questionnaires, 34 claimed to have or have had problems at school. The survey made at the time of closing the Programme (by interviewing 54 students in person) contained the same questions as those included in the questionnaire completed by the Dobbantó students.

### *Conclusions and reflections*

According to our research findings, the one-year development work done in the **Dobbantó classes played a decisive role in the life of the young people** participating in the Programme.

**98%** of the study participants **are happy to have been Dobbantó students**. **89%** of them claim to have acquired a lot of useful knowledge and **practical skills in the Dobbantó Programme** which they can use in life.

CATEGORIES OF PRACTICAL SKILLS	Frequency of mention
Writing a CV	36
Information on employers, visiting workplaces, gaining work experience	25
Job selection criteria	17
Self-awareness (increased self-confidence, better understanding of who I am and what I can do, easier navigation in life, career building)	17
Personal development as a learner, improved manual skills	14
Learning to learn (learning has become easier, acquired a different learning method)	14

Cooperation (helping others, working together with peers, listening to others)	14
Importance of school and learning (helped reintegration, raised interest in new things, showed opportunities for further training)	13
Preparation for admission interviews	12
Increased subject knowledge (Hungarian, math, science, logical skills)	10
Better understanding job advertisements	8
Communication (expressing feelings better, better communication with other people)	8
Tolerance (increased tolerance, easier to accept others)	8
Improved computer and Internet skills	5
Acquisition of completely new skills (sewing, typing, graphics skills)	5
Claimed to have learned new things but could not identify them	4
Sport	2
"I have learned the importance of being punctual" (behavioural norms)	2

While most young people mentioned practical skills, some of them also made reference to moral values (cooperation, forms of behaviour, tolerance).

The students participating in public education were also asked about their emotional motivations ("Describe what made you like a lesson last week"). Compared to the control group consisting of their classmates, **former Dobbantó students seem to place emphasis on different values**. While those who did not experience the Dobbantó values were mainly "happy about" getting good marks, **former Dobbantó students valued interaction** (see the methodology adapted to the students' individual needs), which was followed by two methodologically similar classroom techniques that can play a key role in motivating young people (subject related games, positive classroom management and hands-on activities).

Describe what made you like a lesson last week	Frequency of mention %	
	Former Dobbantó students (n=75)	Control group (n=37)
Interaction	20	8.5
Group work	6.9	0
Hands-on activities (creativity, crafts, gardening)	18.9	22
Good atmosphere	12	13.9
Good marks	4	24.7
Positive classroom management, learning material, subject related games	21.8	16.6
Success	6.9	8.5
Neutral responses (we could do what we liked, solving puzzles, roller race in the classroom)	9.5	5.8

More than half of the students participating in public education (57.41%) confirmed the above opinion when they were asked about the methods, tools or pedagogical approaches which they would introduce in their current schools.

Recalling your Dobbantó year, is there anything that you would introduce in your current school? (n=62)	%
Teachers' attitude, informal conversations, face-to-face mentoring	24.19
Outings	14.52
Extracurricular activities, table soccer, ping pong	12.90
Learning: more variety	11.29
Computer use	9.68
Less learning, less hours	8.06
Workplace visits	8.06
Group work	4.84
Having meals together in the morning	3.23
Do not know	1.61
Did not respond	1.61

### *Summary of research findings*

The labour market and career study of young people (with special educational needs) supported in the school year of 2009/2010 under the Dobbantó vocational school programme followed up the young people's success at school, at work and in everyday life. Various methods were used to get a picture of their integration in the school or the workplace, their effectiveness in learning or working, and the support received from their environment. The study also aimed at enabling the schools to better follow up and support the career and opportunities of their present and future Dobbantó students in education or in the labour market by fine-tuning the Programme and adapting its tools to their local conditions.

The study also provided an opportunity to collect data on the students' subjective quality of life and vision of the future.

The findings of the eight-month follow-up period confirm that the Dobbantó Programme has met its objectives.

The main focus of our study was to find out if the students who participated in the Dobbantó Programme in the school year of 2009/2010 have managed to successfully integrate into the mainstream classes of public education institutions or the workplace environments or communities where they are continuing their career. Can they succeed at learning or working? Can the school or the workplace provide them with effective environmental and organisational support? Has the Dobbantó Programme helped them to successfully manage their own life?

Exploring the young people's subjective quality of life and vision of future had special emphasis in the study, because we are convinced that hope, well-being and a positive vision of the future are inevitable for success in everyday life.

The students entertain an unambiguously positive opinion about the Dobbantó Programme and consider the Dobbantó year to have been a good experience. In particular, they highlighted personal attention, support and the feeling of security, and described their relationship with their peers and teachers as important and supportive. They claim to have learned things which are useful for choosing and planning a career and finding a job.

Following the one-year Dobbantó Programme, the students' integration into the new environment seem to be successful. They have become full members of their new classes, and their social relations are good at both the class and the school levels. Their answers confirm that most of them intend to complete the programme of the school they are currently attending.

The students' academic success has been fuelled by what they learned and experienced during the Dobbantó Programme. Thanks to the continuous reflection on progress and the supportive environment they have learned to understand and evaluate themselves better. The outcomes suggest that the students' success at school also motivated their parents to act as the teachers' partners in supporting the development of their children. Upon seeing academic success, the parents began to support and encourage their children. The students are aware of their personal strengths, and they endeavour to plan and exploit learning opportunities outside the classroom.

The most critical factors included the academic environment and organisational culture of the schools and the impact of these on the former Dobbantó students. As regards differentiation in the classroom, adaptation to individual differences and cooperative learning in small groups, the schools receiving the former Dobbantó students scored much worse than in any other field covered by the questions.

According to the consolidated Engagement Index, nearly half of the former Dobbantó students show involvement in and enthusiasm for their current schools.

Considering the school environment, it seems that the Dobbantó Programme has so far been unable to make the desired level of impact on the organisational and pedagogical culture of the schools joining the Programme, although school based professional development opportunities - for other teachers to learn the Dobbantó methods - were often emphasised in the interviews with the heads. It is assumed that the effectiveness of such school based professional development or in-service training opportunities is often reduced by the size of the school (the total number of students is between 2000 and 3000 in some schools), the teachers' high workload, the isolation of the Dobbantó class, or the physical distance between the member schools of the same educational institution. Apparently, the integration of the new practice and pedagogical culture – which proved to be successful in the Dobbantó Programme – would need conscious leadership support, more time and a more organised approach to school based professional development in the schools joining the Programme. This is an important issue, considering that the schools' child protection officers, heads and teachers all stressed that the majority of students could benefit from a programme like Dobbantó.

According to our findings, the results of the former Dobbantó students and those of the control group do not show significant differences. Similarly, the breakdown by age group and residence has only revealed a few minor gaps. It should be noted, however, that the results of the 19 to 25 year old students differ from the mainstream at several points, but these discrepancies are assumed to be

attributable to differences in age and life experience. There are sharper differences between the results of mainstream schools and the results of schools specialised in catering for special educational needs, which can be explained by the fact that the teachers of the latter are already familiar with approaches and methodologies that are similar to those of the Dobbantó.

The consolidated ESM indices suggest that the students have confidence in the future (Hope Index), as they have a positive view of both their present life and their anticipated life situation five years from now. The Well-Being Index shows that half of the participants are happy and doing well in their everyday life and at school.

Hopefully, our results will help to further improve the Dobbantó Programme and make it easier for the schools to integrate the components of the Programme into their daily practice and pedagogical culture. We hope that the methodological guide can help to increase the effectiveness of following up the success of former Dobbantó students in the future.

#### **Last but not least**

The state secretariat responsible for education within the Ministry of National Resources has promising aspirations which make us trust that a successful project like this will have a place within the regulatory framework of public education and may be continued at a larger scale after November 2011.