

Sustainable Development Certification and Criteria for schools and educational institutes in Finland



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O K K A

*The OKKA Foundation for teaching,
education and personal development*

Finland

Background

Environmental Criteria and Certification 2004

- Initiative for environmental certification was taken by the **Trade Union of Education in Finland** (2000)
- EU Life Environment project "ENVEDU" 2001-2004: development of the environmental criteria and the certification system

Sustainability Criteria and Certification 2009: environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability in teaching, management and school culture

NATIONAL TARGETS, Strategies of Education for Sustainable Development (Finnish National Commission on SD, Ministry of Education, 2006):

- All schools and educational establishments have sustainable development programs by 2010
- 15% of schools and educational establishments have been certified for their sustainability work by 2014

Target groups and aims

Target groups for environmental and sustainability certification:
Schools and educational establishments in **Basic education, General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education, Liberal Adult Education**

Aims of the certification system

- **Development of the quality of teaching, learning environment and operation of educational establishments**
- **Implementation of education for sustainable development in teaching and school culture with a comprehensive approach**



Impacts

- Students' awareness and commitment to sustainable development
- Sustainability-skilled students to working life
- Improved safety, wellbeing and cooperation of the staffs and students
- Cost savings in the operation of schools (waste, water, energy, etc.)
- School's responsible profile (certification)

Finnish Sustainable Development Certification of Educational establishments

Certification management:

- The OKKA Foundation for teaching, education and personal development



Cooperation partners:

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of the Environment
- National Board of Education
- Trade Union of Education in Finland
- Co-operative Eco-One
- Sykli Environmental School of Finland
- Finnish Association for Environmental Education
- Universities and polytechnics

SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA

1. Planning
2. Implementation
 - Sustainability themes
 - Teaching
3. Follow-up, evaluation and development

TRAINING COURSES

- Construction of SD programs
- Auditor courses

MATERIALS

- Manual
- Evaluation tools
- www-pages

AUDITOR NETWORK

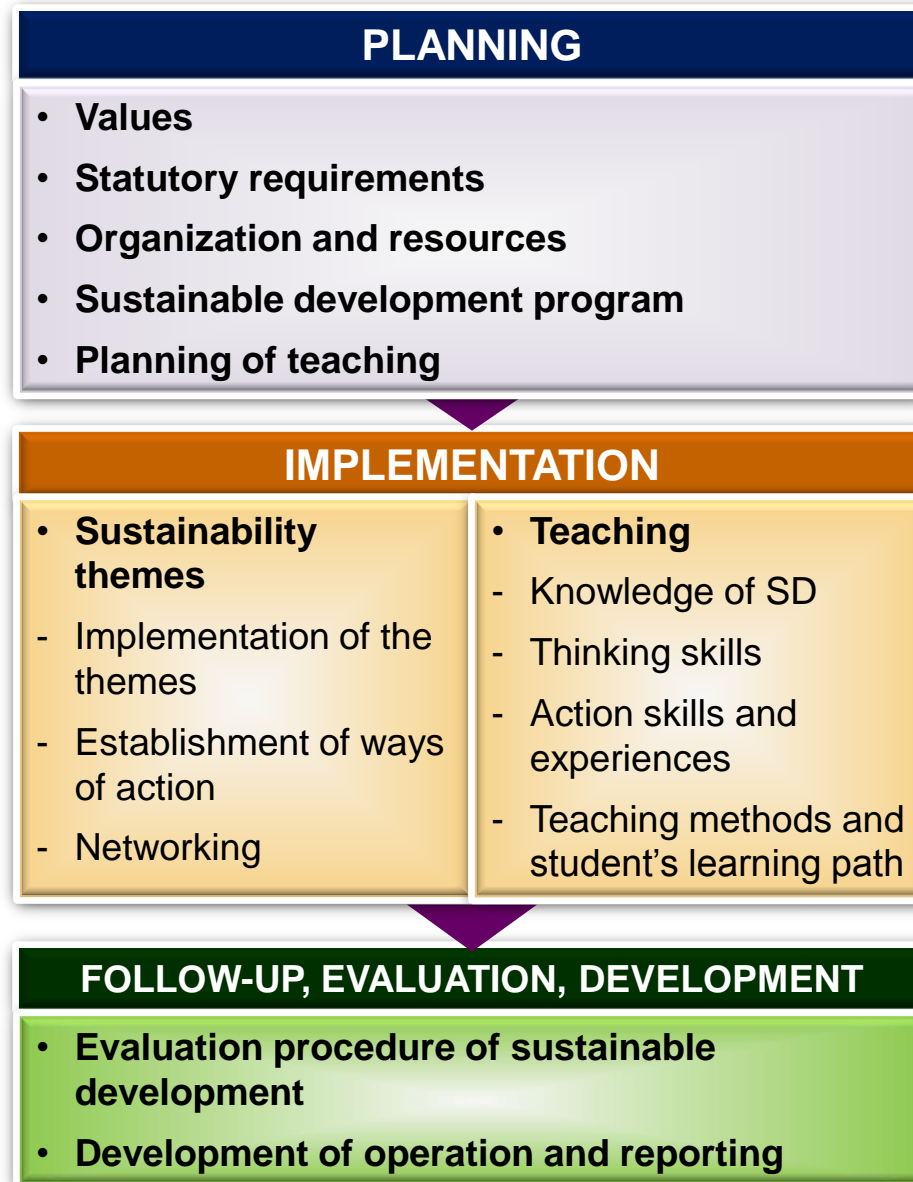
- 100 auditors
- External audits
- Development of certification

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

- Integration of SD in teaching and school culture
- Promotion of wellbeing of students and teachers
- Certificates (8/2014: 70)

Sustainability Criteria: process model

- Quality approach
- Tool for self-evaluation and development
- All aspects of SD included
- Cover management, teaching and learning environment
- Pedagogical model used for the criteria of teaching
- Provide a possibility for certification



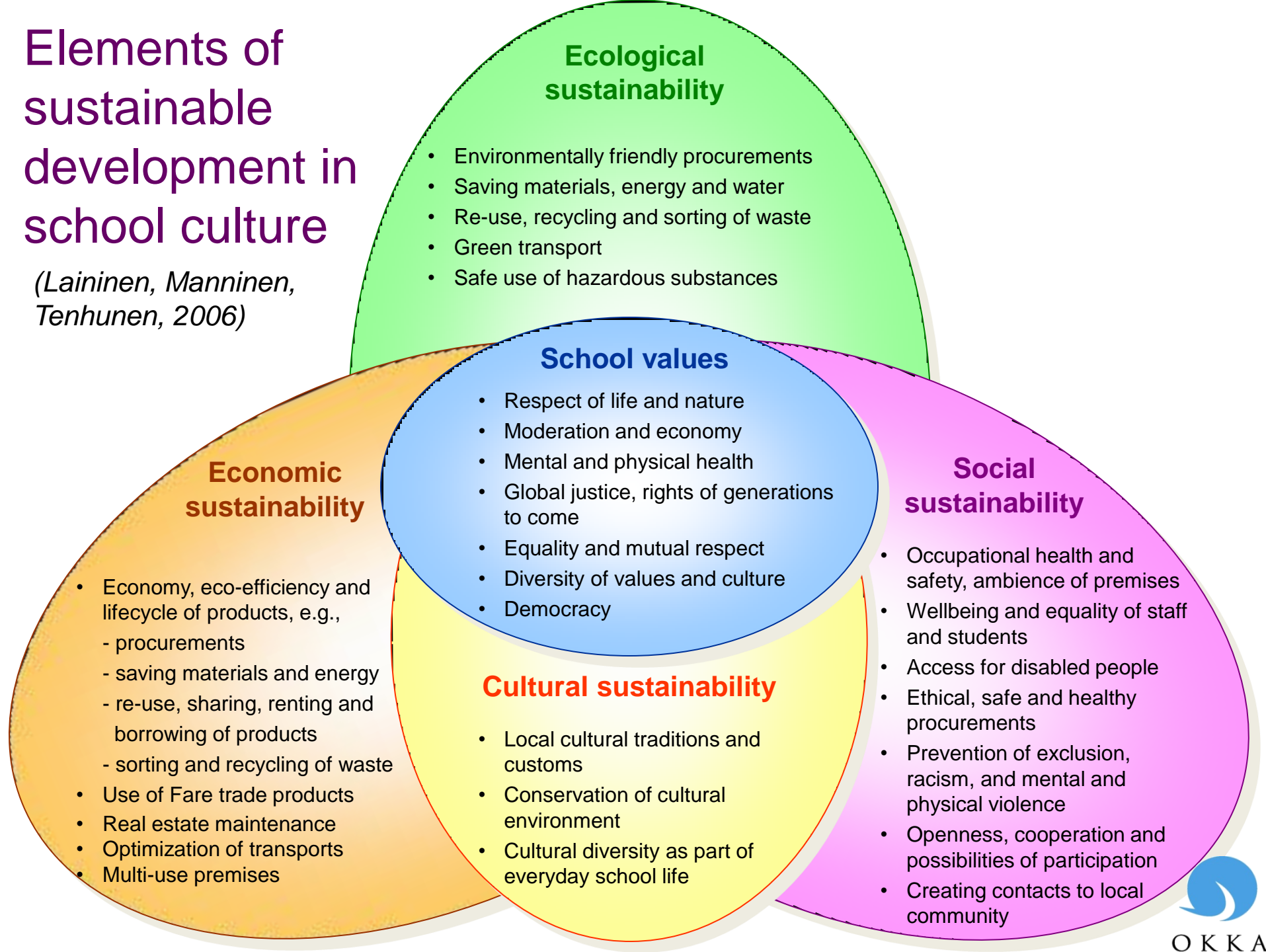
SYKKI



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Elements of sustainable development in school culture

(Laininen, Manninen, Tenhunen, 2006)



Sustainability themes in the criteria

Ecological and economic sustainability	Social and cultural sustainability
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsible procurements and sustainable consumption (also social and cultural sustainability)• Recycling and prevention of waste• Energy and water• Transports and traffic• Nutrition and health (also social and cultural sustainability)• Management and maintenance of the school premises and surroundings• Own theme (ecological/economic sustainability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety of the educational establishment (also ecological sustainability: chemicals)• Wellbeing of the staff and the students• Prevention of bullying and exclusion• Organization of students' support services• Cultural environment and traditions• Cultural diversity and internationality• Own theme (social/cultural sustainability)



Pedagogical approach of ESD

(Sustainable Development Criteria for Educational Establishments)



1. Knowledge of the environment

- Knowledge of ecological, economic, social and cultural environment, SD issues and possibilities of influencing

2. Cognitive skills

- Understanding the wholeness of SD issues and function of nature and the society (*systems thinking*)
 - Searching, evaluation and interpretation of information related to SD, critical assessment of human actions and one's own lifestyle (*critical thinking*)
 - Deepening of one's personal relationship to the environment, constructing of sustainable lifestyle (*future thinking*)

3. Action skills and experiences

- Learning of sustainable ways of action as part of teaching and everyday school life
- Experiences in nature, constructed, social, economic and cultural environments
- Genuine possibilities for participation and influencing in school, participative projects in the local community

Criteria for teaching, background

ESD model used in the criteria (general education)

Knowledge of SD

- ecological, economic, social and cultural environment, SD issues

Thinking skills

- holistic, critical and future thinking

Action skills and experiences

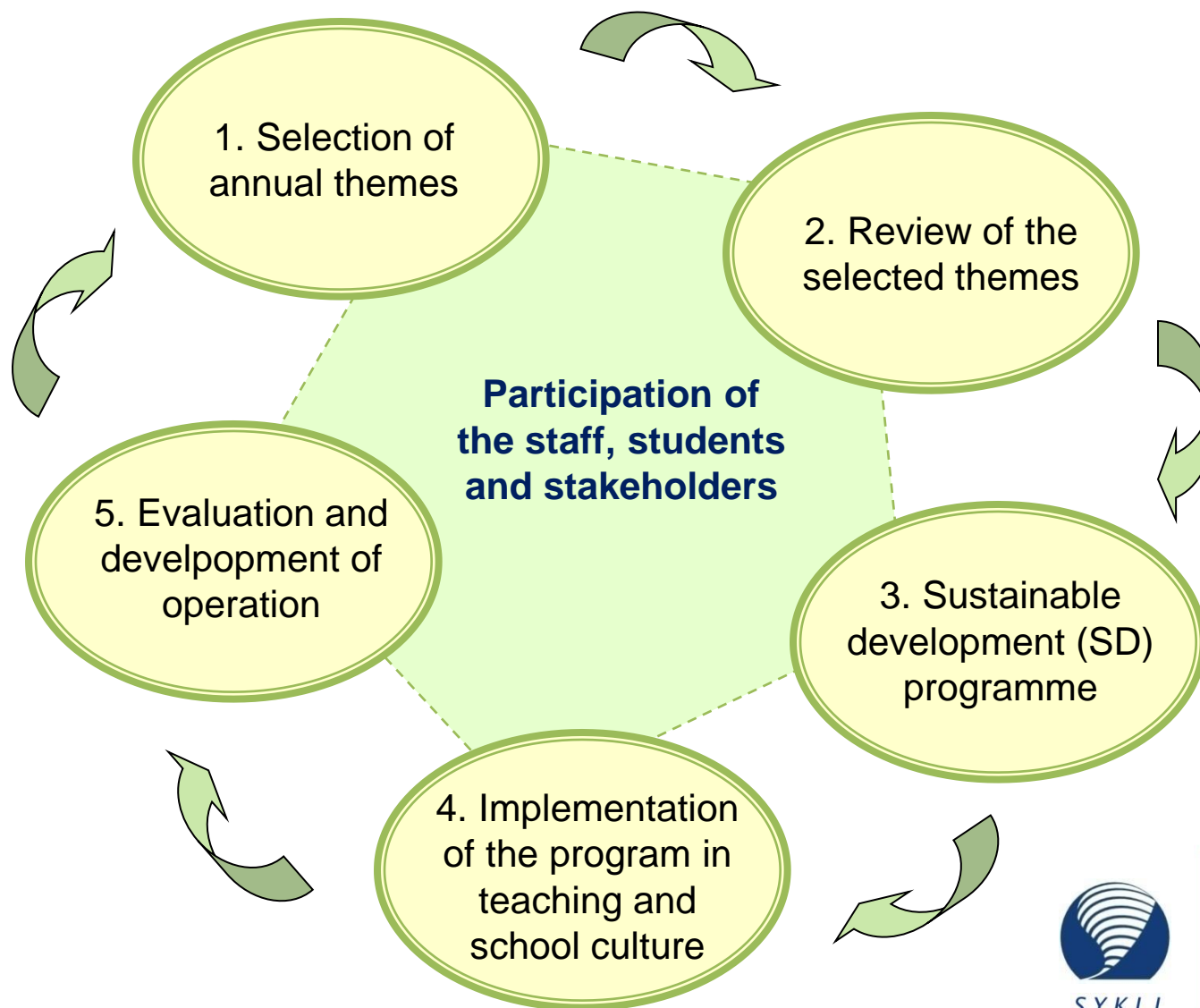
- use of different learning environments
- practicing of sustainable ways of action
- practicing of skills of participation and influencing



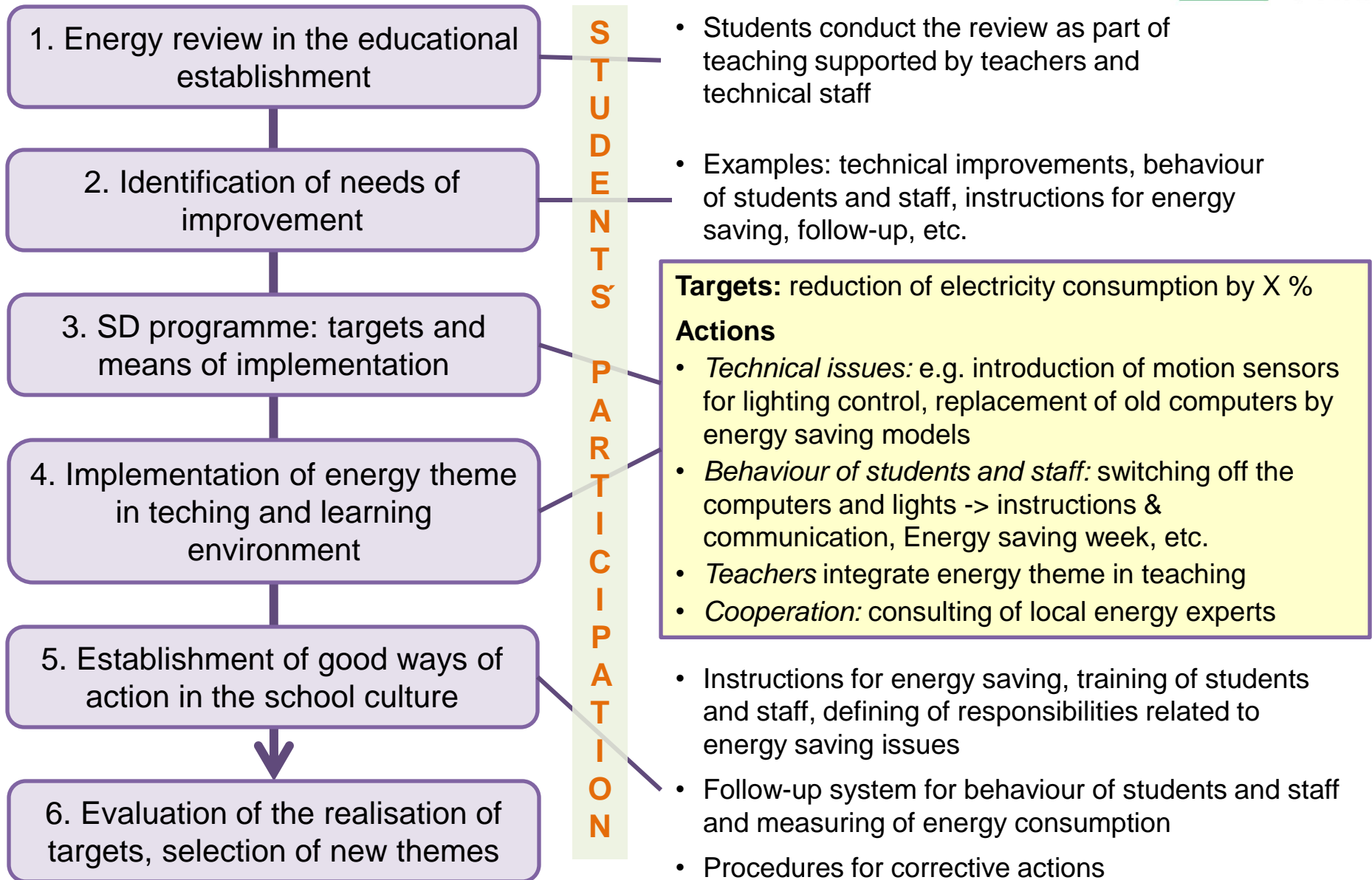
Criteria for vocational education are based on the structure of national core qualifications (evaluation of vocational skills)

- Mastering of work process, working practices, tools and materials
- Mastering of basic knowledge of the work
- Key skills of lifelong learning (sustainable development)

Using the criteria themes for continuous improvement (SD programme)



Example: Energy theme in SD programme



Fulfilment of the criteria

The criteria describe the performance of an exemplary level. The evaluation of the criteria fulfilment is based on a four-step scale familiar from quality assessment models. The general model below has been adopted to the elaboration of evaluation scales for each individual criterion.

Lacking (0 points)	Starting (1 point)	Developed (2 points)	Established (3 points)
The educational establishment has neither planned nor started activities described in the criterium.	The educational establishment has planned activities described in the criterion and started implementation.	The educational establishment has implemented activities described in the criterium at least for a period of one season.	The educational establishment has established permanent ways of actions to secure the operation according to the criterion.

The starting level and needs of improvement identified, actions started.

Evidence of continuing activity according to the criterion.

Continuity of activity is secured by ways of actions described e.g. in the quality system.

Supporting material (website)

EVALUATION TOOLS

SD Criteria

Four-step descriptions of performance level for each criteria

Self-evaluation check-lists

1. Planning, evaluation and development
2. Implementation of themes
3. Implementation of teaching

Examples: implementation of themes

INSTRUCTIONS

Construction of SD programme

Self-evaluation

Applying the certificate

Continuous improvement

Auditors' instructions

Theory: ESD model behind the criteria

Future development:

- Web-based self-evaluation system
- Case bank (certified educational establishments)
- Auditors' forum



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Applying the Sustainable Development Certificate



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The OKKA Foundation is a foundation for teaching, education and personal development supporting the educational sector. Its founding organisations are the Trade Union of Education in Finland OAJ and several teachers' associations in vocational training and education sector.