



QUIS - Quality, Interoperability and Standards in e-learning  
2004-3538/001-001 ELE - ELEB14

# QUIS analysis projects on Quality in e-learning

**Authored by the QUIS team.**

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**e Learning**  
Designing Tomorrow's Education

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## INTRODUCTION

The activities in the QUIS project will be directed towards Quality in e-learning, Interoperability and reusability of e-learning material and development of Standards. The project will also look at cost effectiveness in e-learning. Quality in e-learning is important to be able to exchange both learning materials and learning practices across HEI's in Europe. To establish joint study programs it is essential that cooperating institutions accept each others Quality Assurance Systems (QAS).

In the project workplan the following main activities are identified:

- Quality Assurance Systems (QAS) for e-learning: analyse and disseminate previous projects and results
- enhance the QAS further by focus on the ongoing Bologna process (structure and management), best practice and *academic diversity*.
- analyse existing and experimental e-learning systems (LMS, VLE etc) related to parameters as management capabilities, pedagogical support, content development and adaptability, including also evaluating software quality and openness.
- increase accessibility and understanding of evolving e-learning standards by making an online guide explaining the main objectives and relationships.
- suggest requirements for the next generation of e-learning systems by developing design patterns to guide teachers developing e-learning environments and increase personalisation using both learning objects and agent technologies. This will be one effort to forward European learning tradition to standardisation and interoperability processes.
- To be able to set up a sustainable e-learning programme is of utmost importance to understand and control both development costs and delivery costs and to be able to make realistic estimates for the income potential. The project will analyse available models and case studies and suggest new and balanced models for cost effectiveness of e-learning, taking into account the user perspective (consumer), the supplier perspective and the society perspective. The aim is to help HEI's and other stakeholders in making sustainable e-learning programs.

The work is organised in stages / workpackages (WP). The WP's on **quality in e-learning** (WP2 and WP3) identifies all relevant sources and results from previous or ongoing projects and disseminate these on the QUIS web site. After in-dept studies of the most important sources, QUIS will synthesis and develop the area further both related to QAS for establishing joint study programmes as well as for guidance on how to set up net-based education across language and cultural barriers.

This report is the deliverable of Work package 2 of the QUIS project. The aim of WP2 was: Analyse projects on Quality in e-learning.

Description of work:

- Analysing earlier EU projects, such as MENU, EDU-ELEARN, MECA-ODL, E-LEN, GreTel, Neworkers, etc. taking into account, and from the view of the Bologna process
- Collect and disseminate the relevant results of these projects
- Collect results from partner institutions
- Disseminate findings among the partners

The report is based on information from survey of quality and e-learning projects. We have compiled information of activities about eLearning quality at an international level. For that bibliographic references have been reviewed and databases of the existing resources have been analysed.

As a product of this working package a synthesis of quality projects documents about experiences and projects in the national field has been obtained, and also publications related this subject.

## QUALITY AND THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

In June 1999, 29 European ministers in charge of higher education met in Bologna to lay the basis for establishing a European Higher Education Area by 2010 and promoting the European system of higher education world-wide. In the Bologna Declaration, the ministers affirmed their intention to:

- adopt a system of easily readable and comparable degrees
- adopt a system with two main cycles (undergraduate/graduate)
- establish a system of credits (such as ECTS)
- promote mobility by overcoming obstacles
- promote European co-operation in quality assurance
- promote European dimensions in higher education

Convinced that the establishment of the European Higher Education Area would require constant support, supervision and adaptation to continuously evolving needs, the ministers decided to meet again in two years time.

Two years after the Bologna Declaration, the ministers in charge of higher education of 33 European signatory countries met in Prague in May 2001 to follow up the Bologna Process and to set directions and priorities for the following years.

*In the Prague Communiqué the ministers:*

- reaffirmed their commitment to the objectives of the Bologna Declaration
- appreciated the active involvement of the European University Association (EUA) and the National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB)
- took note of the constructive assistance of the European Commission
- made comments on the further process with regard to the different objectives of the Bologna Declaration
- emphasised as important elements of the European Higher Education Area:
  - lifelong learning
  - involvement of students
  - enhancing the attractiveness and competitiveness of the European Higher Education Area to other parts of the world (including the aspect of trans-national education)

The ministers decided that the next follow-up meeting of the Bologna Process should take place in 2003 in Berlin to review the progress and to set directions and priorities for the next stages of the process towards the European Higher Education Area.

When ministers met again in Berlin in September 2003, they defined *three intermediate priorities for the next two years*: quality assurance, the two-cycle degree system and recognition of degrees and periods of studies. In the Berlin Communiqué, specific goals were set for each of these action lines.

### **Quality assurance**

Ministers stressed the need to develop mutually shared criteria and methodologies and agreed that by 2005 national quality assurance systems should include:

- A definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved
- Evaluation of programmes or institutions, including internal assessment, external review, participation of students and the publication of results
- A system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures, international participation, co-operation and networking

### *The two-cycle system*

Ministers asked for the development of an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area. Within such frameworks, degrees should have different defined outcomes. First and second cycle degrees should have different orientations and various profiles in order to accommodate a diversity of individual, academic and labour market needs.

Ministers underlined the importance of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, which should be ratified by all countries participating in the Bologna Process. Every student graduating as from 2005 should receive the Diploma Supplement automatically and free of charge.

Ministers also considered it necessary to go beyond the present focus on two main cycles of higher education to include the doctoral level as the third cycle in the Bologna Process and to promote closer links between the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA). This added a tenth action line to the Bologna Process:

Ministers charged the Follow-up Group with organising a stocktaking process in time for their summit in 2005 and undertaking to prepare detailed reports on the progress and implementation of the intermediate priorities set for the period.

Two years later in May 2005 the European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education met again in Bergen and reviewed the progress and implementation of the intermediate priorities set for the past two years. The ministers agreed that a substantial progress has been made from Berlin to Bergen. This is reflected in the General Report of the Bologna Follow-Up, presented at the Ministerial Conference. The ministers also received a special report on Bologna Process Stocktaking. These reports were the basis for the drafting of the Bergen Communiqué.

*The Communiqué reflects the development from Berlin to Bergen:*

Taking stock: Priority has been given to developing:

- a three-cycle degree system in each participating country,
- national *quality assurance systems* cooperating in a Europe-wide network,
- mutual recognition between participating countries of degrees and study periods.

### Degree system

- Adoption of a three-cycle degree system
- Adoption of generic descriptors for each cycle (based on learning outcomes (LO) and competences)
- Elaborate national frameworks for qualifications compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications in EHEA.



- First cycle qualifications
  - knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education
  - can apply their knowledge and understanding
  - gather and interpret relevant data
  - can communicate information
  - have developed those learning skills necessary to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy
  
- Second cycle qualifications
  - knowledge and understanding founded upon and extends and enhances Bachelor's level
  - can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments
  - ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements
  - can communicate their conclusions and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly
  - have the learning skill to continue to study largely self-directed or autonomous
  
- Third cycle qualifications
  - systematic understanding of a field and mastery of the skills and methods of research
  - ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity
  - original research that extends the frontier of knowledge some of which merits national or international refereed publication
  - capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas
  - communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general
  - promote technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society

### **Quality assurance**

- Adopt standards and guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education Area

### *Recognition of degrees and study periods*

- 36 of 45 countries ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention
- Call upon national authorities to recognise Joint degrees
- Develop national action plans to improve the quality of the recognition process.

### *Further challenges*

- Higher education and research
  - PhD level qualifications to be fully aligned with the EHEA overarching framework for qualifications

- Emphasis on interdisciplinary training and transferable skills, meeting the needs of a wider employment market.
- Mobility
  - Mobility of students and staff a key objective
  - Commitment to facilitate grants and loans to make intra EHEA mobility a reality
  - Urge institutions and students to make full use of mobility programmes, advocating full recognition of stud periods abroad within such programmes

#### *Taking stock on progress for 2007*

- Implementation of standards and guidelines for quality assurance
- Implementation of national frameworks for qualifications
- The awarding and recognition of joint degrees, including at the PhD level
- Creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, including procedures for the recognition of prior learning

#### *The new realities*

- Students are prepared for an international/global labour market
- Mobile students aiming at faraway destinations
- Growing number of higher education providers increased competition
- Trends:
  - USA intends to increase study-abroad exchange agreements
  - Europe intends to increase number of incoming non-degree students (e.g. through the Erasmus Mundus programme).

#### *Preparing for 2010*

- to establish a European Higher Education Area based on the principles of quality and transparency.
- The European Higher Education Area is structured around three cycles, where each level has
- the function of preparing the student for the labour market, for further competence building and for active citizenship.
- To endorse the follow-up structure set up in Berlin, with the inclusion of the Education International (EI) Pan-European Structure, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), and the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE) as new consultative members of the Follow-up Group.

#### *Regional collaboration - Challenges*

The Bologna Process offers opportunities and threats to a regional cooperation in higher education.

- The Bologna Process removes barriers and intends to create a European Higher Education Area
  - Some of the basic foundations for regional cooperation are now extended to the whole European region,

- which can make regional cooperation less relevant on one side...
  - On the other hand it opens up for strengthened regional cooperation within Europe.
- The Nordic attitude: An opportunity has emerged for profiling the Nordic cooperation in higher education as an exemplary (best practice) cooperation form in Europe.

## II. QUALITY OF HEI IN THE PARTNER COUNTRIES

### HUNGARY

*Bodies and institutions involved in national quality assurance systems:*

Parliament, Government, Ministry of Education, Hungarian Accreditation Committee and Higher Education Institutions

*Responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.*

- Parliament: legislation, establishes new higher education institutions.
- Government: establishes new faculties, defining the qualification requirements of degree programmes (programme level specification).
- Ministry of Education: defines the national quality policy, authorises the launch of new programmes and the introduction of new continuous education programmes, supports institutional quality assurance activities.
- Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB): operates a national accreditation system, evaluates institutions and programmes while advising on quality improvement
- Higher education institutions: quality assurance and quality improvement at programme level.

*The system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures.*

A system of accreditation has been in place since 1993 in Hungary. Accreditation is carried out by an independent body of experts called the Hungarian Accreditation Committee.

Accreditation is compulsory for both new and existing institutions, faculties and programmes, including public and non-public ones alike. The accreditation of new institutions, faculties and programmes is the prerequisite of obtaining a licence for operation, which is issued by Parliament, the Government or the Minister of Education. The accreditation of existing institutions, faculties and programmes is implemented in the framework of institutional accreditation with a cycle of 8 years. The method used for the accreditation of institutions includes an evaluation by external experts based on selfassessments (internal assessment) and concluded with an evaluation report or accreditation decision. This is a method well-known internationally. The students' opinion is requested on the occasion of all visits paid to the institution. As of 2004, all visiting committees have at least one member who is a student. Also, as of 2004, in compliance with the Berlin Communiqué, the full final evaluation is published. Applications for new programmes to be introduced and launched are assessed and accredited based on the submitted documentation.

Their quality requirements are pre-defined and are made available to the public ([www.mab.hu](http://www.mab.hu)). Until now, these have focussed on the input factors. However, a shift has started, where increasing emphasis is placed on the learning process and the outcomes thereof. Pursuant to the Act on Higher Education, institutions are required to develop internal quality assurance systems, and the institutions are free to choose the specific way of implementation. At the moment, nearly one third of all institutions operate a full quality assurance system (ISO, TQM/EFQM or other).

### *International participation, cooperation and networking*

At institutional level, several Hungarian institutions have participated in international quality assurance projects, such as EUA *Quality Culture* or ENQA TEEP Projects 1 and 2.

At national level: the Hungarian Accreditation Committee has an *International Advisory Committee* with 9 permanent members and invited foreign experts. MAB is an active participant of international conferences, seminars and projects.

Examples of the latter are:

ENQA *Quality Convergence Study* (2003-2004) and TEEP Project 2 (2004-2005), and the elaboration of the standard European quality assurance solutions identified in the Berlin Declaration. MAB is a full member of the international organisations of quality assurance agencies such as INQAAHE, ENQA and the CEE Network. MAB also performs secretarial duties for the last one and it has a representative in the boards of all of the above three organisations [which makes it the only such organisation in the world at the moment].

## **ITALY**

### *Responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved*

Ministry for Education, University and Research (Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca, MIUR): promotes scientific and technological research as well as the development of both Universities and other Higher Education Institutions endowed with University status; plans and coordinates developments and changes in the University system; allocates funds to individual Universities and co-ordinates Italian participation in EU and international programmes relating to higher education and scientific and technological research.

Italian University Rectors' Conference (Conferenza dei Rettori delle Università Italiane, CRUI): Rectors from both State and non-State Universities; it investigates and analyses issues regarding the University system, represents University needs to Government and Parliament, expresses opinions on development plans for Universities and on the state of University education, promotes and sustains University initiatives at national and international level through links with similar EU and international associations.

National University Council (Consiglio Universitario Nazionale, CUN): elected representatives from Italian Universities; it carries out advisory functions on matters such as University development planning, funding issues, approval of University teaching regulations, definition of main subject areas, recruitment of teaching and research staff.

National Council of University Students (Consiglio Nazionale degli Studenti Universitari, CNSU): advisory body of student representatives; it presents a report on student conditions to the Minister and puts forward proposals on University reform, funding issues, organisation of the different degree courses, and promotion of orientation and mobility programmes. It elects student representatives for the CUN.

National Committee for the Assessment of the University System (Comitato Nazionale di Valutazione del Sistema Universitario, CNVSU): 9 members, appointed by the Ministry. They need not be academics and can be of any nationality. They work on general criteria for the assessment of University activity, experimentation, application and dissemination of assessment methods and practices, revision on data Universities are required to submit every three years, implementation of yearly based programme of external assessment in Universities, any other activity related to Quality Assurance, carried out on request of the Ministry, such as further advisory roles, definition of standards, parameters and regulations, etc.

Regarding the evaluation of quality, a national system - on the model of those put in place in other countries (national agencies running Assessment exercises with Guidelines, effective evaluation procedures and peer review) is still not in place for teaching, although CNVSU has been in operation since 1999. CNVSU has published documents and proposals for a national system of university quality assessment, but this system is still not in place. The CNVSU collects yearly data from Universities, which include some indicators; moreover it analyses the "evaluation reports" provided by Universities' Assessment Units (Nuclei di Valutazione) and drafts a national report, based on the information provided and on questionnaires submitted by the "Nucleo" of each University to the students. CNVSU also establishes minimal requirements for the setting up of a Degree Course in Universities.

The University Internal Assessment Units were established by law in 1993; since then, their role has been re-defined (1999) and at present their tasks include: drafting an annual report on the basis of the request of information issued by CNVSU, in particular on the internal structures and their activities; collecting and sending data on the basis of indicators provided by the CNVSU; submitting a questionnaire to the students in order to be informed on their opinion concerning the teaching activities; drafting a report on the results of the questionnaires, to be sent to the CNVSU. The Assessment Units also provide their advice on the PhD Courses to be set up (or to be confirmed) in their own University, on the basis of established requirements.

Research assessment is carried out by another body, CIVR (Committee for Research Assessment) with competencies both for Universities and Research Bodies: the first assessment exercise for Universities started in the summer 2004; specific Guidelines have been published and the research assessment is carried out by panels of experts (national and international) who will evaluate the outputs of research activities for the different areas (peer review).

The "CampusOne Project" has been launched by the CRUI, with the aim of improving the teaching quality and to promote the quality culture among Higher Education Institutions; it is based on both internal evaluation and external evaluation, for evaluating degree courses, and can be adopted by Universities on a voluntary basis. Since 1995 CRUI has implemented procedures for teaching assessment related to first degree courses: the assessment has involved bachelor courses at 70 Universities.

Some Universities autonomously implemented ISO 9000:2000 systems to the whole Institution or to single parts of it.

### *The system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures*

A system of accreditation for recognition purposes is in operation and is being improved. The system has been implemented by MIUR at the advice of the CNVSU. The system is based on the definition and evaluation of so called *minimal requirements* for the sustainability of a degree course. Such minimal requirements deal, in summary, with the number of courses offered (w.r.t. the disciplinary categories covered), the number of teachers involved, the available premises and the predicted/programmed number of students participating.

At present CRUI is developing an accreditation framework for the teaching activities of Universities for Regional Bodies (in Italy regional accreditation for training and teaching activities is needed - also for Universities – in order to have access to additional funds at local level). CampusOne programmes are certified by the CRUI. Programmes that decided to implement an ISO system are certified by Bodies accredited at SINCERT (Sistema Nazionale per l'Accreditamento degli Organismi di Certificazione e Ispezione).

### *International participation, cooperation and networking*

Italy is a member of the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) through the CNVSU, and of the European University Association (EUA) through the CRUI. To provide an international perspective in assessment, the regulations of CNVSU state that the 9 members of the board can be of any nationality.

## **NORWAY**

### *Responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved*

The primary responsibility for quality assurance rests with the higher education institutions themselves. The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, NOKUT is an independent government body, established with the aim of monitoring and developing the quality of higher education in Norway through evaluation, accreditation and recognition of quality assurance systems, institutions and study programmes. This division of responsibilities is defined in the Act on Universities and University Colleges, and is also continued in the new Bill presented to the Storting.

NOKUT has the following responsibilities:

- To assess the quality assurance systems of the higher education institutions based on the requirements laid down in the Ministry of Education's Regulation governing NOKUT and the supplementary criteria stipulated by NOKUT itself. NOKUT shall through quality audits carried out in regular cycles, evaluate and pass judgement on all the accredited institutions' internal quality assurance systems. In addition to acting as a control mechanism, the audits are supposed to be conducted in a manner beneficiary to quality development.
- To accredit private institutions
- To accredit state institutions applying for a change of status.
- To accredit new study programmes at institutions which do not have the right to establish new study programmes. These decisions cannot be modified by any other

authority.

- To review accreditations already given. Any institution can have accreditations revoked or suspended, for the entire institution as such, or for individual programmes, following a negative assessment in this type of evaluation. The evaluations are conducted by experts appointed by NOKUT.
- To carry out other types of evaluations with the purpose of investigating, assessing and developing the quality of higher education in Norway. The Ministry may instruct NOKUT to undertake such evaluations.
- To recognise foreign education/diplomas (includes the Norwegian ENIC/NARIC unit, the Lisbon Recognition Convention information unit.)

### *The system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures*

The meaning of accreditation in the Norwegian system is: A professional assessment as to whether a higher education institution and the programme provided by the institution fulfil a given set of standards. Accreditation is not limited to a specified period of time, but will be considered valid until explicitly revoked, following an assessment with the objective to revise accreditations already given. The accreditation system is a combination of institutional and programme accreditation. Standards concerning institutional accreditation are laid down in regulations set by the Ministry. Further criteria for institutional accreditation, as well as standards and criteria for programme accreditation have been developed by NOKUT.

All the state institutions were at the time of the establishment of NOKUT considered accredited. NOKUT will, however, have cyclical evaluations of all the institutions every six years in order to establish whether their quality assurance systems are satisfactory (audits).

Private institutions were not considered accredited institutions as such at the time of the establishment of NOKUT due to the former system of accreditation of programmes for private institutions. Thus, private institutions have to apply for institutional accreditation in one of the three other categories in order to obtain the same rights as state institutions in that category. A system where the higher education institutions can apply for accreditation for another category has been established. If successful, the institution will be granted increased autonomy in establishing new study programmes.

In addition to the other standards laid down in the Ministry's and NOKUT's regulations, one of the preconditions for accreditation is that the institution possesses a satisfactory system for quality assurance. All state institutions are required to have a system of quality assurance by 1 January 2004. The institutions are required to document their work on quality assurance and quality development, as well as to document that their quality assurance systems will uncover instances where quality is at risk. The systems should include routines for student evaluation, institutional self-evaluation and the follow-up of these evaluations, documentation of the institution's development of the learning environment, as well as routines ensuring the continuous development of the work of the institutions in relation to quality.

As for programme accreditation, as described in 2.2, the right of higher education institutions to establish new study programmes varies according to the category the institution belongs to. Should an institution wish to establish study programmes going beyond its right to establish new programmes, the institution has to apply to NOKUT for accreditation. There are standards and criteria for all three main levels of degrees: Bachelor, Master, and Ph.D. – and for short cycle higher education (2-year) degrees.



### *International participation, cooperation and networking*

At present, one of NOKUT's board members is a Pro Rector from Denmark. Norway strives at appointing an international member as part of the Board of NOKUT. At least one of the experts in the evaluation panels should come from another country, for language reasons usually one of the Nordic countries. NOKUT is highly active in the international arena of quality assurance, being a member and an active partner of the European Association of Quality Assurance (ENQA), the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA), the Nordic Quality Assurance Network in Higher Education (NOQA) and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). In addition NOKUT has entered into bilateral agreements with the Spanish quality assurance agency ANECA and the South African agency the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC).

## **SWEDEN**

### *Responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved*

All institutions of higher education are, according to the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance, responsible for quality assurance of all their activities. "Activities shall be adapted so that a high quality is achieved, in education as well as in research and artistic development. Available resources shall be efficiently utilised in order to maintain a high quality of activities. Quality efforts are a joint matter for staff and students at institutions of higher education. (Law 2000:260)"

The National Agency for Higher Education conducts continuous quality evaluation of higher education. Its evaluation extends to all higher education including doctoral studies. It scrutinises the quality assurance activities undertaken by the institutions themselves and considers applications for the right to award degrees. On behalf of the Government the Agency examines applications from higher education institutions for the right to give doctoral degrees in a special area of research. The Agency also, on behalf of the Government, examines applications from private institutions for the right to award degrees.

### *The system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures*

The National Agency For Higher Education validates programmes leading to professional degrees. This is done following an application from an institution, which gives a description of its preconditions for offering a specific degree (number of current and projected students, scientifically qualified staff, infrastructure, etc.). It is then visited by a group of external experts who recommend (or not) degree-awarding powers. A similar process exists for upgrading colleges to full or partial university status, although in this case, the decision on whether or not to upgrade is made by the government. These are the accreditation processes.

Another form of accreditation within the Swedish national quality assurance system is connected to the programme and subject reviews. All higher education leading to a professional or general degree is evaluated at least once every six years. These programme and subject reviews which include self-study, site-visit and public report have a three-fold aim of development, control and information to students, the government and the general public.

The evaluation involves possible negative consequences in the form of institutions losing their degree-awarding powers for inferior provision of programme/subject. So the programmes or subjects in question within the institutions that don't lose their powers are then accredited.

*International participation, cooperation and networking*

The National Agency for Higher Education is the responsible agency for quality and has an international advisory group to ensure the international perspective in the quality assurance system. "The Advisory Board" consists of five internationally eminent researchers in the field. Added to this, is international participation in the different evaluation teams responsible for carrying out examinations of subjects and programmes. International contribution and participation is also common in the internal quality work at the institutional level. However, Swedish legislation does not permit international representation in governing bodies of public organisations.

The majority of Swedish higher education institutions are actively involved in different international associations and organisations looking after their interests on the European level. The different students associations are also internationally engaged.

Sweden is a member of the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) through the National Agency for Higher Education. There is also a Nordic Network of Quality Assurance Agencies that is, to an increasing extent, cooperating with the stakeholders, the institutions and the students, regarding quality issues.

### III. CLASSIFICATION

A variety of QA approaches have been developed for various purposes and different perspectives. In order to compare QA approaches, it is necessary to identify a classification scheme, determining the scope, purpose, and method of each approach.

- Lifecycle Model focus on different phases on a product, beginning with planning to the termination of a product's use. (e.g ISO 9000 ). Production and service processes follow a certain lifecycle, starting with the very first idea ending with the termination of a product.
- Functional Model cover different functional areas of educational activities, ranging from administrative issues to the design of learning units. This approach focuses on functional areas in the design process.

We can distinguish:

- *product oriented*
- *process oriented*

QA approaches.

## IV. E-LEARNING QUALITY PROJECTS

### 1. mENU: A model for a European Networked University

#### *Project Background and Objectives*

The MENU project sets out to create a model for a European Networked (Virtual) University, providing a variety of e-learning opportunities. The model will be based on experiences from previous projects and activities at the partner institutions. It will include an organisational structure, a quality assurance system, examples of joint courses and study programmes across institutional borders, guidelines and a demonstrator of a practical e-learning environment. The demonstrator will focus on ICT-related studies.

Partners in MENU will constitute the core of a future consortium, a permanent, sustainable ENU, offering courses and degree programmes across Europe. ICT will be extensively applied for administration, contact and information, learning environment and virtual mobility of students and staff. Dissemination of findings will make the model and the consortium available to other institutions.

MENU is one of several European Commission projects and it is placed in the directory called eLEARNING ACTION PLAN. You can find out more about EUs e-learning projects from this link: [www.elearningeuropa.info](http://www.elearningeuropa.info)

#### *The elements – parameters of quality*

In this section there is a brief presentation of the most significant parts and elements within the mENU quality assurance system, which are identified as follows:

- Administration
- Study Programmes
- Courses
- Staff
- Students

To go into all these areas in detail will be too much for a relatively small project. But it is important to be aware of all the issues since some of them play important roles in different settings. In the search to find an acceptable quality assurance system, for e-learning, applicable to the institutions involved in the mENU project – or a future ENU – an analysis is needed. Below is a brief outline of the role that these elements have.

#### *The criteria*

To assess and assure quality, mENU QAS defines 5 specific quality attributes as criteria of the quality level of the above generally presented elements.

As shown in Figure 2, the criteria applied to the aforementioned QAS elements are:

- availability
- usability
- performance

- security
- potential for change

*Source*

<http://munin.hsh.no/lu/inf/menu/index.htm>

## **2. MECA-ODL: Methodological Guide for Analyses of Quality in Open and Distance Learning Delivered via Internet**

### *Project Background and Objectives*

MECA-ODL is carried out with the support of the European Community in the framework of the SOCRATES programme, in the MINERVA ODL action. The project reference number is 87901-CP-1-2000-1-ES-MINERVA-ODL.

The content of this project does not necessarily reflect the position of the European Community, nor does it involve any responsibility on the part of the European Community. The Fundació Universidad-Empresa de la Universitat de València, ADEIT is a non-profit-making institution bound to the University of Valencia, that actuates as link between the educative world and society; within three concrete intervention areas: Training, Research and Technological Development, and Employment.

Over the past years, ADEIT established a resource and services centre to support Open and Distance Learning entitled "AULA VIRTUAL" (<http://www.adeit.uv.es/av>), that offers distance courses through Internet as much targeted at professionals as at Postgraduate and specialisation University students. This virtual environment includes pedagogical, technical and human resource elements. Since 1996, when the courses started up, some 400 students/professionals from different educative backgrounds have been using the VIRTUAL CLASSROOM.

Aiming at improving the quality of ODL teaching systems and to promote it at an European level, ADEIT has been co-ordinating since 1996, two Socrates projects "Neptuno - Network of entities promoting Training in Universities with ODL" (ref. number: 25116-CP-1-96-1-ES-ODL) and "Test for ODL - Teachers' and Students' Training for Open and Distance Learning" (ref. number: 56111-CP-1-98-1-ES-ODL), besides its participation as co-ordinator and partner in various projects from other community programmes (LEONARDO, ADAPT, CEDEFOP, FORCE, COMETT, LINGUA, NOW, HORIZON...).

In the SOCRATES NEPTUNO project, a laboratory of Open and Distance Learning resources based in Internet was developed (<http://www.adeit.uv.es/neptuno>), that was experimented all along the project TEST for ODL in 5 different European Universities (University of Valencia, University of Southampton, University of Bamberg, University of Limerick and University of Palermo).

We are currently experiencing a boom regarding ODL training through Internet, with plenty of technological resources, training activities, learning communities, etc... However many institutions involved in the development and organisation of these courses do not have clear criteria to guaranty the quality of their products.

On the other hand, many ODL users via Internet can feel disorientated when having to choose which criteria to apply when selecting a course or a specific learning methodology.

### Aims

The main aim of the project is to develop a methodology to analyse the quality of ODL training projects in all its phases: conception, development, teaching and evaluation from

different quality criteria: in terms of methodology, of contents and of technology. As a final objective, the project is seeking the unification of criteria to develop quality standards in ODL, that could be used as references for organising entities and users of this type of training.

*Further project objectives are:*

- Determine the elements that make ODL training of quality in terms of methodology, contents, didactic and technology.
- Establish evaluation criteria for ODL training through Internet.
- Produce a methodological Guide for quality analysis of ODL training in each of its development phases.
- And as operative objective, highlight on:
- The creation of a network of entities with knowledge to analyse the training quality of ODL through Internet.
- The production of a methodological Guide to analyse the quality of ODL training in all its components and to be used as much for new projects as for ongoing ones.
- The development of a tool to evaluate the quality of materials and training courses through Internet.

*Project outcomes*

- Methodological Guide of quality criteria regarding ODL training via Internet
- Quality analysis software available via Internet
- Application of the quality analysis software in training actions using the net.
- Entity network to promote quality training through Internet

*The Phases of the ODL*

Seven phases are involved in the development, production, delivery and evaluation of ODL objects, modules or courses:

- Conception
- Analysis
- Design
- Content
- Production
- Delivery
- Evaluation

*Source*

[www.adeit.uv.es/mecaodl](http://www.adeit.uv.es/mecaodl)

### 3. NETWORKERS: New Models for Enhancement of ODL use in Life-long Learning of Workers

#### *Project Background and Objectives*

The main goal of this project is the setting up of an authentic forum for debate, discussion, promotion and dissemination around the topic of the uses of Internet as a tool for continuous training, through the experiences at European level of different previous projects and actions carried out in Leonardo and Socrates. This forum must generate reference for the promotion of open and distance training through Internet.

Specific objectives are:

Analyse and evaluate the results of each project in any of these topics:

- integration of ODL training in more traditional training methods; organisational changes
- training the trainers/tutors in ODL Internet and training curricula
- changes in the training process and collaborative models of learning and teaching
- students competencies and motivation
- contents development and tools
- distance training providers in the web
- evaluation and quality of learning results
- certification of ODL through Internet
- cost-effectiveness of ODL through Internet
- new technologies training: impact on enterprises
- characteristics of “learning organisations”
- training management in Internet

Elaborate reports with orientations and good practices of continuous training in Internet in each of the subjects referenced above.

Favour the promotion, dissemination and transfer of results of the projects developed under Leonardo and Socrates.

Generate information / training material for enterprises, decision-makers and training organisers in distance training: technical and human resources / advantages / difficulties / opportunities, etc.

Set up a group at a European Level of reference centre, excellence and assessment on distance training through Internet for SMEs.

Obtain a global overview of recommendations about the development, implementation and evaluation of ODL-Internet targeted to managers and workers.



## Area 6. Quality of learning results

### *Objectives*

Objectives of this activity is analysis of the results of the Leonardo and Socrates projects related with web based DT. Identification, analysis and evaluation of the pilot projects, similarities and differences of approach, criteria and results. Improving the quality of online training by tracking advantage of new educational and methodological approaches

The area of Quality of learning results implies analysing, the whole learning process, starting from learning needs up to delivery. There is a need to compare different existing models and standards.

Quality is a value judgement interpreted by students, educators, employers, stakeholders, government representatives etc. Quality should be planned, guided and controlled by the management of the educational institute.

The situation of quality management of education differs from country to country. We have to make comparison evaluation of national and international methods.

The outcome will be a continuous improvement in quality to satisfy customers and to give a contribution to the the quality of DE in society.

Whatever methods are used to improve quality, they will only be effective if the desire to continually improve quality is fully embraced as a fundamental business philosophy. This should bring about an improvement in quality to the benefit of students, business performance of the institute and to society at large.

This can be achieved by the following methods:

- Quality guidelines
- Accreditation systems
- Staff education
- Employment and experts
- Membership of associations
- Competitive pressures
- Refund guarantees to students
- International standards

### *Source*

<http://leonardo.euproject.net/go.cfm?PageId=4822>

#### **4. GreTel: eLearning in Europe: needs, experiences and instruments**

*Collaboration of European experts on the development of internationally applicable eLearning modules*

##### *Project Background and Objectives*

eLearning experts from Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and the Czech Republic are working together in the LEONARDO project GreTel in order to develop instruments for the production of internationally applicable online-based eLearning programmes of high educational and technological quality.

Scientists, software developers, enterprises, tutors and learners from five European countries collaborate on the adaptation of an eLearning module initially produced for national use only to other languages and to various cultural contexts.

Content, language, didactics, cultural and technical aspects of the module have to be adapted to different pre-conditions and requirements in different countries.

By adapting and developing eLearning-Modules for the use in different countries the GreTel-eLearning experts improve their expertise and international experience. On this basis they create various instruments for transnational adaptation and implementation of eLearning-modules, which are made accessible to the general public on the project's Website.

Our multifunctional Website also gives access to adapted online courses to learners from different countries and provides eLearning-experts with a communication- and dissemination-platform. A print-report "eLearning for international users" will present the project's outcomes and will discuss them in a series of articles by European eLearning experts. The report will be published by the end of 2003 as volume 33 in the series "Wirtschaft und Weiterbildung" in W. Bertelsmann-Verlag, Bielefeld, Germany.

*Source*

<http://www.poolweb.it/gretel/interne/project.asp?M=1>

## 5. E-LEN: A network of e-learning centres

### *Project Background and Objectives*

The E-LEN project is a project under the Socrates Programme which aims to create a Network of E-Learning Centres and leading organisations in the learning technologies. The E-LEN network will support a diverse constellation of learning centres around the world, have a strong capacity for developing and delivering pedagogically-informed technology for effective e-learning experiences and disseminate these experiences to other institutions.

### *Project outcomes*

- Establish the necessary infrastructure and organisational structure for the network of e-learning centres. See the ELEN booklet: Design expertise for e-learning centres: Design patterns and how to produce them
- Identify and gather best practices, make a collection of design patterns, research roadmaps on e-learning and to enhance the dissemination of such results
- Produce guidelines for establishing learning centres.  
See PDF document: Implementing an institutional e-learning centre: guiding notes and patterns

### *Source*

<http://www2.tisip.no/E-LEN/>

## 6. EQO: European Quality Observatory

### *Project Background and Objectives*

The main objective is to provide a comprehensive platform for developers, managers, administrators, decision makers and end-users to find a suitable quality approach that fits their needs.

Moreover:

- providing a conceptual framework for the description and harmonization of quality approaches.
- suggesting a reference framework as a European quality standards. The project will be directly linked to standardization groups of [CEN/ISSS \(Workshop Learning Technologies\)](#) and [ISO/IEC JTC1 SC36](#) in order to transfer results from standard committees to the users and vice versa. One of the main outputs is the development of a European quality framework, a harmonized model for e-learning quality.
- providing an internet-based repository for quality management, quality assurance and quality assessment approaches for the field of e-learning.
- providing recommendations for the use of quality management, quality assurance and quality assessment approaches for various target groups (e.g. end users, HE administrators, developers) and for specific purposes (e.g. process improvement, product transparency, domain-specific purposes, national / regional / local needs).
- providing services to support the implementation of quality approaches in organizations.
- Users will be able to use internet-based applications that help them to implement quality approaches (such as process models, quality criteria) adapted to their context, objectives and experiences.
- establishing and supporting a European community of practice in order to reach a common understanding of the concept of e-learning quality.

*The different steps to reach the aims are planned as followed:*

#### PHASE 1 - Collection of Quality Approaches

In this phase quality approaches shall be collected and described. It is based on the results of the CWA Quality Assurance of the [CEN/ISSS Workshop Learning Technologies](#), where a collection of approaches was already provided. Therefore the focus is on the reuse of quality approaches, not original research on this field.

#### PHASE 2 - Conceptual Design / Classification of approaches

The approaches collected in phase 1 will be classified in a classification scheme which provides a structured approach to search and retrieval purposes. The classification scheme is also based on the classification of the CWA Quality Assurance of the [CEN/ISSS Workshop Learning Technologies](#). This classification contains the following attributes: general data (e.g., name, description, source), methodology, target groups, processes, results / products, assessment criteria, and standards. The European dimension of this project is obvious: Based on the diversity of approaches and perspectives on quality, a transnational exchange of experiences and a harmonization is necessary. This project will generate a European quality community which will improve the quality of e-learning.

### PHASE 3 - Development of the repository

Based on the classification, an intelligent search engine for quality approaches will be developed. Users will be able to submit, search, retrieve, and adapt quality approaches for their specific needs and purposes (e.g. searching for certain domains, adapting approaches for a certain organization, submitting own approaches). Furthermore, users will be able to add quality approaches to the observatory. The repository is based on a repository for thesauri, developed by EUN within the CEN/ISSS WS Learning Technologies. The most important function is the adaptation of quality approaches for users: users can adapt generic quality approaches (e.g., process models, product criteria) to the needs and requirements of their organization. This tool will enable developers, users, and decision makers to easily implement quality mechanisms in order to improve the quality of their E-Learning processes and products.

### PHASE 4 - Community and expertise

A community of practice (the users of the repository) will provide additional experiences and expertise for quality assurance approaches. By this dynamic approach, the exchange of experiences, evaluations, and expertise will be facilitated. The network will consist of users, organizations, and other networks creating, researching, or using quality assurance methods for E-Learning. Different topic-centred works-groups will be facilitated to improve specialized discussions.

### PHASE 5 - Evaluation

The repository will be continuously evaluated by external experts in order to improve the concepts and developments, but also the acceptance within the community.

### *Project outcome*

The EQO model

*Source*

[www.eqo.info](http://www.eqo.info)

## **7. SEEQUEL: Sustainable Environment for the Evaluation of Quality in eLearning**

### *Project Background and Objectives*

The SEEQUEL - Sustainable Environment for the Evaluation of Quality in E-Learning - project originates from the joint initiative of the e-Learning Industry Group (eLIG) and of a number of European expert organizations and associations at all levels of education and training, co-ordinated by the MENON Network.

It therefore brings together, in a fundamental way, the companies in the e-learning industry who provide the tools and services, the users, the expert organizations and agencies.

In order to define a cohesive, inclusive and robust approach to the Quality in the implementation and use of e-Learning systems and processes, the SEEQUEL project aims at taking the required step to establish a European "eLearning Quality" Forum.

### *Project outcomes*

- Quality assessment, evaluation and conformance practice;
- Cases of "good practice" and design guidelines;
- Quality assurance frameworks (with criteria and standards).

### *Source*

<http://www.education-observatories.net/seequel/index>

## **8. QUAL-E-LEARNING: La qualité de l'eLearning**

### *Project Background and Objectives*

The project aims at achieving the following general and specific goals:

- Contribute to the definition of a general framework of e-learning quality;
- Form the basis of an European debate on the characteristics of use and on e-learning quality;
- Promote a better coordination of the actions carried out in this field both by each Member State and at Community level;
- Guide the reflection and the choices of those which are and especially which could become teachers, producer-users, customers or users of these training instruments.

Give to 200 key training actors working in Italy, France, Germany and Spain (involved in all levels of training systems) knowledge, tools and methods to improve evaluating the effectiveness and the impact of training cycles that include the use of e-learning.

This objective will be achieved through the application of a reference model based on best practices, and by providing methods and techniques of application, reference standards and the conditions that ensure the transfer of these practices.

### *Project outcomes*

Handbook of Best Practices for the evaluation of eLearning Effectiveness

Different types of actors within the e-learning process:

- Students
- Trainers
- Conceptors
- Training bodies
- Leaders
- Learning management system experts
- Platform editors

### *Source*

<http://www.qual-elearning.net/>

## **9. UNFOLD: Understanding New Frameworks of Learning Design**

### *Project Background and Objectives*

UNFOLD is a 2 year EC Framework 6 Support Project. It is THE space for people to participate in the implementation and adoption of the IMS LD-Spec.

The UNFOLD project is supporting the adoption of open eLearning standards for multiple learners and flexible pedagogies

We are now in our final period, leading up to the end of the project on 31st December 2005.

### *Project outcomes*

- Providing access to public resources about Learning Design (many of which are on this Web site)
- supporting and facilitating the Communities of Practice (CoPs)
- Organising regular face to face meetings
- Organising workshops, and attending conferences and

### *Source*

<http://www.unfold-project.net/>



## **10. EUA: Developing an Internal Quality Culture in European Universities**

Socrates project. European University Association

### *Project Background and Objectives*

The European University Association, as the representative organisation of both the European universities and the national rectors' conferences, is the main voice of the higher education community in Europe.

The Quality Culture Project had its origin in the EUA's action plan 2001-2003 and Policy position paper on quality (approved by the EUA Council in September 2001). Both documents emphasised that, in issues of quality assurance, the point of departure must be the universities' capacity for developing a robust internal quality culture, and stressed that this capacity is integrally linked to institutional autonomy and public accountability.

The Quality Culture Project aims at contributing to the development and embedding of a systematic and coherent quality culture in universities as well as to the general goals of the Bologna process through increased transparency and attractiveness of European higher education. It increases the awareness within the institutions for the need to develop an internal quality culture and to promote the introduction of internal quality management. This in turn helps the institutions to approach external procedures of quality assurance in a constructive manner.

The innovative and dynamic working method for this project is grounded in EUA's philosophy. As a pan-European association representing a variety of institutions in numerous national settings, EUA's activities have repeatedly demonstrated the benefit of mutual learning in the context of European diversity. Both the highest and the lowest resourced institutions can learn from one another in meaningful ways.

The project guidelines are based on the combined methodology of two long-standing and interlinked EUA programmes, both using SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) as an analytical tool:

- The Institutional Evaluation Programme examines the institutions' capacity for change, that is, their ability to develop and implement a strategic plan, as well as the robustness of their internal quality arrangements. In brief, the evaluations are set within a dynamic and context-sensitive approach rather than focused on a universal criteria or method.
- The Management Seminar (co-sponsored with IMHE/OECD) uses small group work to discuss, in a supportive environment, the participants' specific leadership and management issues.

Participants are invited to conduct a SWOT analysis of their institution and to develop action plans based on these analyses. Every work phase is discussed (i) in each participating university to ensure the widest engagement possible of the community and (ii) within the networks to receive advice and gain inspiration from the activities of partner institutions. Thus, the successive small network meetings, building upon another, generate good group dynamics that are maintained through sustained email exchanges within and across networks.

All networks in Round I of the project (2002-2003) have followed the EUA Guidelines for the project and have praised their constructiveness as well as the dynamic process that they initiated. One network report noted that "the project could act effectively as a form of external review but with a developmental enhancement focus rather than the negative implications associated with an externally imposed system of audit."

#### Elements of quality of EUA

- Senior leadership
- Strategy, Policy and Planning
- Data, Information and analysis
- Staff
- Students
- Other members of the Institution

#### *Project outcomes*

- Report on the Quality Culture Project
- Good Practices

#### *Source*

[http://www.eua.be/eua/en/projects\\_quality.jsp](http://www.eua.be/eua/en/projects_quality.jsp)

<http://leonardo.euproject.net>

## 11. Open and Distance Education Quality Council ODL QC Standards

### *Project Background and Objectives*

Open and Distance Learning Quality Council ODL QC is the UK guardian of quality in open and distance learning. Set up originally by government in 1968, we are now an independent body.

Accreditation is open to all providers of home study, distance learning, online or e-learning and other open learning or flexible learning courses, as long as they meet our standards. For details, see:

- how to apply for accreditation;
- resources and advice on quality;
- links to other sites.

Learning with an ODL QC-accredited provider means being sure of good service. Help available includes:

- advice on open and distance learning;
- advice on buying courses;
- what to do if things go wrong.

These Standards in Open & Distance Learning were adopted in September 1999 by ODL QC as those necessary to ensure good quality in any open or distance learning provision. They were revised in February 2000

These standards apply across the whole range of ODL provision, though their implementation may differ from provision to provision.

Within each Standard, paragraphs in italics amplify how quality in the area covered by the standard should be interpreted; whilst they are integral to the standard, they are illustrative rather than mandatory in character.

When applying for **accreditation**, a provider should address all the standards, and give evidence that the standard has been met.

Where a standard is not applicable, a statement of why it is not applicable should be included in the submission.

If that standard has not been met, a clear statement of the reasons should be given, and of how the provider intends to remedy this situation.

Some standards represent best practice, and failure to meet them may not necessarily debar a provider from accreditation but will highlight an area needing improvement for continuing accreditation.

*Project outcomes*

The Standards are subdivided into ten sections

1. Course Objectives & Outcomes
2. Course Contents
3. Publicity & Recruitment
4. Admission Procedures
5. Learning Support
6. Open Learning Centres
7. Learner Welfare
8. The Provider
9. Joint Provision
10. Accreditation

*Source*

<http://www.odlqc.org.uk/index.htm>

## **12. ELUE Improving quality of e-learning in universities e-learning project**

### *Project Background and Objectives*

ELUE is a European project chosen by the European Commission as part of the "Preparatory and innovative actions 2003/b - eLearning" invitation to tender. It is led by the CRUI (the Italian Conference of University Rectors, which is equivalent to the French CPU) and piloted in France, by the CPU assisted by the AMUE. ELUE has three objectives :

- The analysis of the experiments underway and already completed in the universities of the countries involved (Italy, Finland and France)
- The comparison of these different experiments and the identification of “best practices” on the basis of shared standards
- The establishment of an eLearning and higher education observatory.

The general objective of the project is improve quality of e-learning activities engaged in within the university world. In particular through the activities of the project it will achieve the following objectives:

### *Source*

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/elearning/projects\\_2003/elue.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/elearning/projects_2003/elue.pdf)

### **13. SEEL: Supporting excellence in E-Learning**

#### *Project Background and Objectives*

Supporting Excellence in E-Learning (SEEL) is a project dedicated to the quality in eLearning, taking the point of view of a learning territory: what does quality mean for a learning region (or city) becoming an eLearning region (or city). In the framework of the project, we define an eLearning territory (region or city) as a territory using knowledge, information and learning technologies (KILT) to value all its assets, individual, organisational, industrial, cultural, patrimonial, social etc. The SEEL project has now moved forward and is part of the creation of the European Foundation for Quality in E-Learning ([www.qualityfoundation.org](http://www.qualityfoundation.org)).

SEEL (Supporting Excellence in E-Learning) is a consortium dedicated to the study of the impact of quality policies in e-learning at local and regional levels.

SEEL is an open initiative and we invite other regions and partners to join the initiative through the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Four organisations have recently been approved to receive the SEEL Quality for eLearning Regions and Cities Awards 2004. These awards are intended to promote and reward excellence in using information and communication technology to support the development of learning regions and cities.

#### *Project outcomes*

- eLearning quality guidelines
- eLearning Regions and Cities Memorandum of Understanding (eLRC MoU)
- eLearning Regions & Cities Centres of Excellence Charter
- eLearning Regions & Cities Benchmark system

#### *Source*

[www.selnet.org](http://www.selnet.org)

## V. CONCLUSION

The approaches cover a variety of aspects and perspectives for the quality of learning.

As a conclusion of the analysis, we have found, that most of the QAS of the projects focus on development and design, ensuring quality from teachers/developers/managers perspective. The student perspective concerning transparency of learning environments are often neglected. Lack of a generally accepted QAS in Europe, for the traditional mode of delivery, too.

The analysis of Quality projects has shown that there is currently no harmonisation effort towards a common European Quality Assurance System.

This study has identified accepted quality assurance approaches. Since this study is only a preliminary result, further development have to be taken to work out the QAS for e-learning.

We have proposed a process oriented system for quality assurance. But for the design and development processes based on different approach. Process and product oriented are combined into common framework.

For each process, a detailed process description, guidelines (e.g. similar to ISO 9000) should be prepared.

An online quality management system for e-learning will be developed in the e-learning production. Although ISO 9000 accreditation is not necessary, those principles were applied where they were considered useful. The instructional design process (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation) is the major process of the system. This process is subdivided into steps or procedures, each with inputs, outputs, roles and responsibilities and supporting documents.

Aim: within education and training the aim of a quality management system is to ensure that the provision of service is both consistent and continually improving. It is recognised that there are philosophical and practical differences between education and training. These real differences should not impact upon quality management systems to any significant degree.

# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE QUIS PROJECT

Recommendation: Quality Criteria/indicators/measures in QUIS QA system

## 1. Analysis

The task is to define exactly the target groups and their needs and on this basis to draft the purpose of the training. The needs analysis is a very complex phase, since it should actually address all dimensions of needs, from business to learner requirements, bearing in mind that education not only a single solution

### 1.1. Justify the requirements

Purpose is ensuring the needs the course must meet are identified. Tasks is identify the learner requirements, the performance requirements, and the business requirements

### 1.2 Organize and run the analysis

Purpose is to plan how much, from whom, and how to collect data related to identified performance and learner requirements.

### 1.3 Define the educational tasks.

The tasks must be clear, and specified. Which group of learners will be targeted. Sort and analyse data and create a summary document and obtain commitment on the course purpose

## 2.Design

The process of Design is to provide a planned structure to the learning event. During this phase, findings from Analysis are used to design a course

### 2.1 Design planning.

The provider shall prepare plans for each design activity. The plans shall describe or refer specially to these activities and define responsibility for the implementation.

### 2.2 Outline the contents.

The designer may decide approaches that are either subject oriented or learner centered.

### 2.3 Outline the delivery system.

A delivery system can take many formats, depending on methods and media that are used to present course materials. The design will adopt for either group learning or individual learning and choose for various media (lecturing, multimedia, e-learning etc.)

### 2.4 Outline the evaluation strategy.

Evaluation should measure whether learners meet the course objectives. It is therefore important that objectives should not only deal with subject matter in terms of knowledge.

### 2.5 Decide the quality criteria.

Monitoring system to all stages of the learning process. Quality systems, standards. Feedback from learners, teachers, developers.



### **3. Development**

The development uses the course description, as the result of the Design stage, to shape the actual course. The development process consequently goes along similar part ways as the design process.

#### 3.1 Organizational conditions.

The development of course material ought to be based on a project plan, which describes routines, finances and other resources, the delegation of responsibility among those involved, and time schedule for the work.

#### 3.2 Target group.

The development and use of material must be based on an appraisal of the target group's needs, qualifications, knowledge and experience.

#### 3.3 Select media and materials.

Determine the media and materials for use in lessons.

#### 3.4 Develop the contents.

The process can be supported by consultation of the following resources: Existing materials, conventional materials, literature, and other resources.

### **4. Production**

The output of previous stages is design, development course materials. These materials are the input of production page. The results (output) of production stage are the course materials ready for delivery

#### 4.1 Assemble media and materials.

Purpose is to produce the final version of media and materials, according to design specifications. During production process results should be measured against the goals.

#### 4.2 Reproduce course materials.

Copy course materials should be monitored that the copies meet course specifications and quality standards.

### **5. Delivery**

The process of Delivery includes the final preparation and the actual running of the course

#### 5.1 External conditions

Laws, regulations, standards for education government plans and certification schemes in the relevant field.

#### 5.2 Organisational Conditions

For every study programme should be a description that specifies the goals , content, standard length of the study, learning material, teaching activities, learning activities, evaluation procedures, time constraints, requirements for previous study.

The educational institution should have staff with professional and pedagogical expertise that corresponds to the subject content and level of programme.

The fees must be reasonable relative to the benefits that students receive in the form of study materials and teaching.

It must be ensured that all of the parties have a common understanding of all aspects of the programmes goal.

#### 5.3 Students

It must be decided and measure the previous knowledge of the students.

Contracts and terms of study must be formulated in accordance with the consumer legislation.

#### 5.4 Material

#### 5.5 Teachers.

It must be specified the competence requirements for the teachers in all courses. The training institution ought to motivate the teachers to keep both professionally and pedagogically abreast of their field.

#### 5.6 Communicate the course.

Tools need to be prepared that let learners know details of the course and their value to them, as well as possible pre-course learning activities.

#### 5.7 Teaching, guidance, other support

The institution ought to make sure that the students receive the learning support they need, e.g. the possibility of telephone contact, etc. The institution should have a system for follow up of teachers work. The institution have to get functioning systems for follow up and support of its students regarding their performance during the programme.

### **6. Evaluation**

Evaluation is the meaning or interpretation of data from the assessment in an institutional setting, the evaluators may be students, faculty, and accredited agencies. The results of an assessment process should provide information which can be used to determine whether or not intended outcomes are being achieved.

#### 6.1 Students achievement of goals.

The institution should have a system for the evaluation and monitoring of the extent to which the student achieve the goals that were established for the individual courses.

#### 6.2 Course completion.

The institution should have systems for registration and presentation of its results in the form of statistics regarding graduates, number of successful exam candidates, registering the relationship between recruitment to and competition of various types of programmes, rates and results of the courses.

#### 6.3 Teaching results.

The institution should have systems for the evaluation, tests, examination and documentation of teaching results. Evaluation and documentation can be conducted continuously throughout the programme and a final examination. Diplomas, certificates should give correct documentation of the programme content and level, plus the student results.

Based on data on students' progression, results and viewpoints, the institution ought to evaluate the extent to which students' and institutional goals have been achieved, both generally and for the individual courses and programmes. In the event of departures from these goals, the institution ought to take corrective measures.

## VI. TERMINOLOGY

This chapter deals with the terminology used in this report.

### DEFINITIONS

#### Audit

A systematic way of checking that the policies, processes and procedures within a quality management system are being adhered to. Audits may be internal, carried out by staff from within the organisation, or external.

#### ISO 9000

An international quality standard which specifies requirements for certification against which a Quality Management system can be assessed. The assessment (or audit) is carried by an external company known as a certification body.

#### Quality Assessment

Quality Assessment denotes the totality of measures carried out consistently and systematically in order to insure that a product conforms with the requirements of a stated specification (EN 180000)

#### Quality Assurance

Quality assurance denotes all the planned and systematic activities implemented within the quality system, and demonstrated as needed, to provide adequate confidence that an entity will fulfill requirements for quality (ISO 8402).

#### Quality Circle

A group of colleagues in any field, who meet regularly to review and discuss examples of best practice, in order to ensure continuous improvement in the services and products they offer.

#### Quality Control

A procedure for checking work after it is done and then correcting it if faulty.

#### Quality Management

Quality management denotes all activities of the overall management function that determine the quality policy, objectives and responsibilities, and implement them by means such as quality planning, quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement within the quality system (ISO 8402).

#### Quality Management System

A QMS is a way of formally ensuring that an organisation is consistently in control of the quality of the products or services that it supplies to its customers. It is formal because it consists of a system of controlled, documented processes and procedures which can be audited.

#### Quality Plan

Any document setting out specific quality practices, resources and sequence of activities relevant to a particular service, course or programme.

### Quality Policy

Quality Policy is a meaningful statement drawn up by an organisation, to reflect their commitment to quality processes, procedures, services and products.

### TQM

Total Quality Management focuses on achieving quality and can be defined as a philosophy and a set of guiding principles that intend to meet and exceed the needs and expectations of various external and internal customers

### Standards

Standards are regulations giving requirements to achieve rationalization, quality assurance, safety, environmental protection, and improvement of communication in industry, technology, science, administration and public.

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# Author team of QUIS reports



Contributions to QUIS reports are produced by staff members at the partner institutions. All of these persons have taken part in discussions and production leading to this and other reports. Contact authors for this particular report are listed on the front page.

The activities in the QUIS project will be directed towards Quality in e-learning, Interoperability and reusability of e-learning material and development of Standards. The project will also look at cost effectiveness in e-learning.

Quality in e-learning is important to be able to exchange both learning materials and learning practices across HEI's in Europe. To establish joint study programs it is essential that cooperating institutions accept each others Quality Assurance Systems (QAS).

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