

A Training Guide for Quality Assurance (QualiTraining)

Project description

Updated 18th May 2006

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This project is carried out in cooperation with the ECML and the European Association for Quality Language Services - EAQUALS

This project is supported by QUEST Romania and other national associations – Members of EAQUALS, as well as the International Learning and Research Centre, UK

1. CONTEXT

This project is intended as a follow-up to the ECML project “Quality Assurance and Self-assessment for Schools and Teachers” (project 2.7.1 in the 1st MTP); it is thus meant to take “Quality assurance” aspects further as “QualiTraining” of trainers and multipliers, building on the network of professionals who participated in the previous project.

At the same time, it builds on expertise developed within EAQUALS and the institutions represented through the team members – the Goethe-Institut, the International Learning and Research Centre, UK, QUEST Romania and OPTIMA Bulgaria, as national quality associations.

It also builds on the concepts and instruments developed by the Council of Europe in the field of self-assessment and standardisation of evaluation criteria, such as the European Language Portfolio and the Common European Framework of Reference.

Feedback gathered at workshops and conferences on quality assurance has indicated that

- a) this is a field still needing more awareness-raising among FL professionals and language education institutions, as well as among decision makers
- b) the CD ROM on “Quality Management in Language Education” (outcome of the 1st MTP) needs an accompanying guide for trainers and multipliers, to ensure its effectiveness as an instrument for quality assurance since FL professionals need more familiarisation with quality assurance practices
- c) there is a growing interest in national and regional contexts for standardisation in areas such as evaluation, approaches to quality control and management

- d) the desirability of exchanging expertise between the public sector and the private sector of education in the field of quality assurance, esp. re techniques, procedures and instruments developed in one sector that are adaptable to other contexts as well, in order to raise the standards of language education in general
- e) an emerging interest in consolidating expertise at local level, e.g. interest in setting up a pool of inspectors and multipliers at national level, e.g. in countries where national quality assurance bodies have been recently set up or where they are in the process of being set up
- f) in several national and regional contexts there is interest in transferring quality concepts and best practice developed in ELT and the FL teaching/learning practice of widely taught languages to the teaching and learning of less widely used and taught languages
- g) there is growing interest in and need for spreading the use of the European Language Portfolio as a self-assessment and quality assurance tool for different user groups in a variety of contexts (e.g. primary, secondary, adult education/learners).

Addressing quality assurance in a coherent way across fields of language education, across languages and regions, can contribute to better social cohesion, so that all citizens can expect to receive services of equal quality standards, irrespective of the language they are aiming to learn.

Aiming towards achieving better standardisation of approaches to quality assurance training would also contribute to creating equal opportunities for trainers representing different languages (including less widely taught languages) to have access to information, to familiarisation with best practice and to training in quality assurance matters.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

General aims

A Training Guide & Trainer Training for Quality Assurance:

- ⇒ development of a training guide for quality assurance.
- ⇒ training of multipliers/trainers to set off a cascading process;
- ⇒ working towards consolidating a quality assurance culture in language education across Europe and beyond.

Specific objectives

1. Developing a guide for trainers and multipliers, which will provide training and resource materials for those responsible for setting up and implementing quality management systems and for training others to do this. It will draw on the resources developed in the CD-ROM for Quality Management produced in the first medium term project;

2. Training multipliers and piloting the “QualiTraining Guide” through regional training events (to be conducted in various regions of Europe and for different domains within the wider field of language education) and a central dissemination and training event at the ECML, in Graz.
3. Building bridges with other teacher training projects in the 2nd MTP:
 - a. raising awareness of quality assurance issues, making concepts and terminology used in quality management more transparent and relevant to teacher trainers / teacher educators / language educators,
 - b. linking concepts & procedures developed in the quality management project with conceptual frameworks & practices developed in other projects (esp. those targeting teacher training for language educators and those focusing on self-assessment and the European Language Portfolio); for this purpose, developing a ‘cross-project’ component and liaising with other project teams, as shown below.

3. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. A training guide on quality assurance - “QualiTraining Guide”, drawing on the *CD ROM on Quality Management*, on the basis of needs analysis, including documented feedback on the applicability of the existing CD ROM to such training activities.
2. Inclusion in the Guide of a printed overview of the CD ROM contents to make it an effective support resource for the training materials provided.
3. A ‘cross-project component’ in the form of checklists or other guidelines to help other projects in the second MTP to apply quality assurance principles and procedures.
4. A series of multiplier-training events: 2 - 3 regional workshops and a central dissemination and training event for trainers, multipliers, quality inspectors, policy makers (e.g. at institutional, county or national level, esp. if they also have training/multiplier experience), etc.
5. The creation of a network of professionals with interest in quality management in language education.

4. ACTION PLAN

2004

January – February

(Small-scale) gathering of informal feedback on the use of the CD ROM (ECML, 1st MTP) and preparing the first project team meeting;

13-14 February

Meeting of the project team in order to:

- fine-tune the stages within the project and outline a more detailed action plan;
- define possible target user groups and procedures to analyse their needs
- produce a draft outline of the proposed guide

- explore possible content options and organisational principles in relation to the Guide's function(s)
- discuss what format of the final outcome would best meet needs identified so far (book and accompanying CD ROM)
- identify relevant resources to draw on and plan further action.

February – September

Carrying out the needs analysis, collating the results and, on the basis of these, producing some draft sections / units of the Guide.

1-2 October

Meeting of the project team to work on

- the further development of the “QualiTraining Guide”
- the planning of multiplier training through events to be organised in 2005
- opportunities for developing the ‘cross-project’ component;

October 2004 - June 2005

- *continued development of the first draft of the Guide*
- *continuing the gathering of other data relevant to the “QualiTraining” project*
- *Web support – Maintenance of the existing web site and regular updating to complement work done on the project; in addition, to organise a one-week forum, to exchange experience & feedback on the use of the CD ROM and the piloting of the QualiTraining Guide.*

2005

Throughout 2005

- *liaising with other project teams interested in ‘building cross-project bridges’ (see Objective 3)*
- *participating with presentations on “Quality Management” to some expert meetings or workshops organised by other project teams, as relevant, so as to*
 - *integrate a ‘cross-project’ Quality Assurance component into the teacher training materials being developed through other ECML projects;*
 - *get input/suggestions re the development of the “QualiTraining” Guide.*

21-22 January

Meeting of the project team in order to:

- review and plan further the development of the “QualiTraining” Guide
- prepare the 2 regional workshops
- develop the 1st draft of an information leaflet;

6-8 October

Regional event 1 – United Kingdom

Event Description

Introducing participants to the QualiTraining Guide. The purpose is to explore the contents of the Guide as a possible tool for staff development (not to train participants

in Quality Assurance). It will be an opportunity for them to share their knowledge and experience in this area and through their feedback to support the Project Team in the final shaping of the Guide in view of its publication.

The regional event will provide the basis for future networking activities. It is hoped that the Guide - its contents and methodological approach - will be disseminated further by the workshop-participants and that feedback will be provided to the Project Team and the ECML.

The regional event outcomes, subsequent communication and developments, including an e-forum on these issues, will be hosted on the ECML web-site.

Participants' Profile

Trainers of language educators, professionals with managerial responsibility (principals, academic managers, curriculum leaders, etc.), quality inspectors, language advisors, practitioners with interest in quality management, multipliers and key-trainers who are influential nationally and regionally.

8-10 December

Regional event 2 – Bulgaria

Participants' Profile

The regional workshop will be designed for heads of language schools, academic managers, teacher trainers, language advisors, quality inspectors, people involved in running quality control schemes and activities in language education and also representatives of teacher training institutions, language teachers associations, quality control associations, representatives of the respective departments of Ministries of Education

It will address professionals in the public as well as private sector.

The participants will pilot aspects of the QUALItraining Guide, share experience and provide feedback to the project team.

December 2005 – March 2006

Tasks to be carried, i.e.

- *working towards and on the development of full pilot version of the “QualiTraining Guide”;*
- *web support.*

2006

17-18 March

Expert meeting (project team plus 5 further selected experts) for consultation on project outcomes and dissemination strategies.

More specific objectives:

- to analyse the outcomes of work in years 1 and 2 of the project
- to refine the draft of the QualiTraining Guide
- to explore directions to be pursued in the dissemination process.

Profile of participants (in addition to the team members):

Selected experts representing the different target groups identified including also some coordinators of other projects in the second MTP (see Objective 3 above);

1-2 September

Meeting of the project team to prepare

- the central workshop;
- the final draft of the Guide for piloting in the central Workshop;
- to provide web support.

12-14 October

- ECML **workshop**.

Objectives:

- presentation of project outcomes in terms of activities and expertise developed
- multiplier/trainer training and consolidation of the multiplier/trainer network
- piloting the “Qualitraining” Guide, collecting feedback for the finalising of the main project outcome for publishing in early 2007

Profile of participants in the central workshop:

Multipliers, trainers of language educators (facilitators) in areas related to Quality Assurance, professionals with managerial responsibilities, involved in setting up and/or co-ordinating quality assurance in their educational context, practitioners with interest in quality management and in becoming multipliers; essential are experience of quality management training and experience of implementing quality management programmes

2007

February

Publication of results.

5. LANGUAGES

The working languages of the project are English and German. Simultaneous interpretation will only be provided for central events (ECML workshops).

Participants are expected to be fluent in either English or German and to have receptive competences in both.