

DELIVERABLE 6.1

QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN

WP6 – QUALITY ASSURANCE

WP Leader: UAIC

Target groups: trainees, administrative staff

Dissemination level: institution

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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The present Plan provides an overview of the main Quality Assurance (QA) procedures set up by the ICMED project consortium. QA will measure and assure the quality of the project's processes, outputs, and impacts in order to:

- deliver value to the target beneficiaries,
- fulfil the requirements of the project sponsor,
- operate in an efficient and timely manner, and
- assist in the strategic-decision making during and after project lifetime.

The quality of the ICMED project is to a large extent guaranteed by the quality of the partners, as well as the quality of the work plan. However, a close monitoring of the project quality at different stages of its implementation is felt to be crucial for its success.

The Plan therefore provides a framework against which both partners and target groups can formally check the quality of the different elements of the ICMED project. It describes the main guidelines and minimum criteria for smooth operational project management, as well as the various tasks related to quality assurance, and covers internal and external quality assurance processes, both ex ante and ex post. The Plan was approved by the project Steering Committee.

Results derived from this Plan will be used by the ICMED coordinator and the project team to improve where possible.

It is important to stress that along with project partnership comes a set of responsibilities, which are described in detail in both the project application and the Partnership Agreement. It is expected that all project partners have good knowledge and understanding of both documents.

The University of Padova (project coordinator), together with the University of IASI (WP leader), will be responsible for ensuring the compliance with the QA Plan by all partners.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A successful quality assurance framework is guided by: the pursuit of continuous improvement, a focus on ICM training, the necessity of encompassing all WPs, accountability and transparency, and documentation and implementation of guidelines/procedures. These guiding principles aim to assist the project in establishing or improving their quality assurance frameworks and to support the Project Management when assessing the frameworks in place.

OBJECTIVES OF ICMED QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

ICMED project quality assurance framework is based on recognition mechanisms and mobility, international relations capacities mission. It is comprehensive and accounting for the full range of its offerings and activities and includes provisions to cover all of the WP. It is in line with the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE):

The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE)

http://ec.europa.eu/education/opportunities/higher-education/doc/charter_en.pdf

*provides the **general quality framework for European and international cooperation** activities a HEI may carry out with Erasmus+. The award of an ECHE is a pre-requisite for all HEIs located in a Programme Country and willing to participate in learning mobility of individuals and/or cooperation for innovation and good practices under Erasmus+. The Charter is awarded for the full duration of Erasmus+.*

The ECHE Annotated guidelines outline the requirements your institution must fulfill in order to comply with the Charter principles. Please also refer to the ECHE Monitoring Guide.

https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/annotated_eche_guidelines_2016.pdf for information.

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/document-library/eche-monitoring-guide_en

While the ECHE is not required for Partner Country HEIs, the quality framework will be established through inter-institutional agreements signed by all partners.

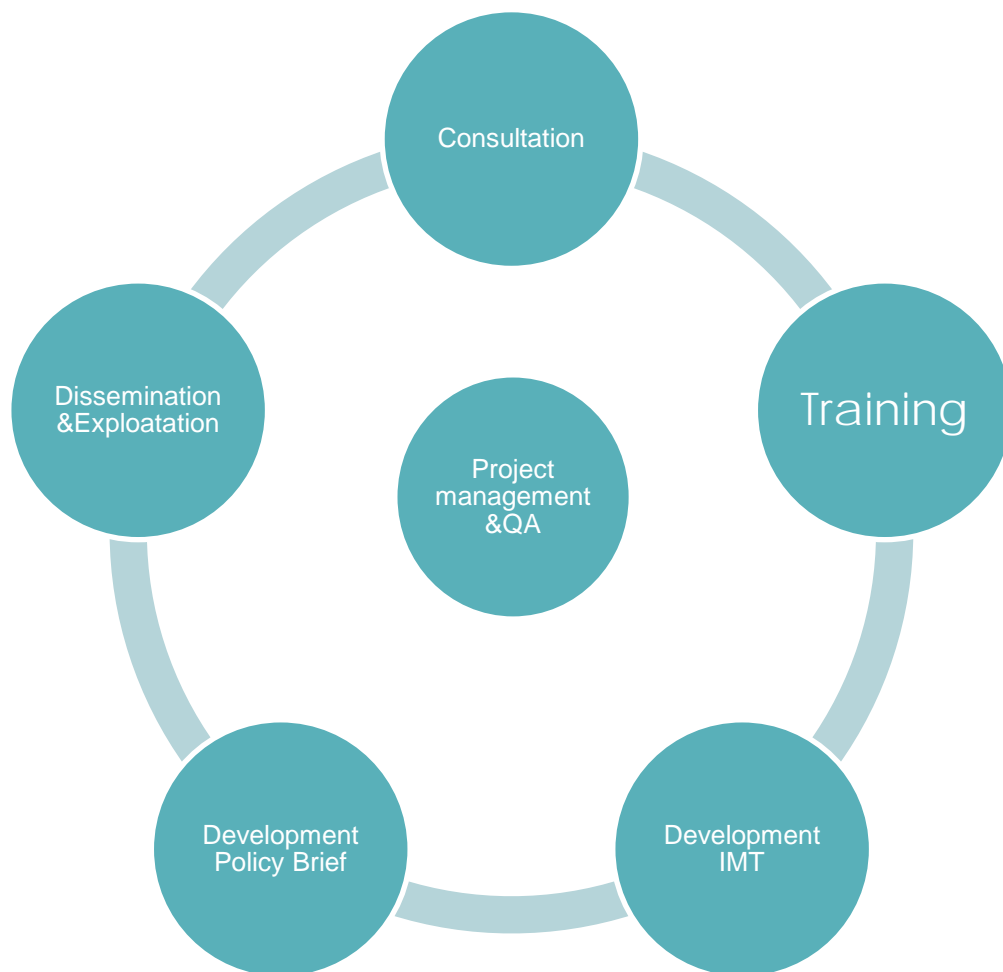
Source:https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/erasmusplus/files/international-credit-mobility-handbook_en.pdf

The objectives of quality assurance framework are to assure the quality of project and to ensure that stated deliverables can be realized.

The **purpose** of each WP is to answer the following two questions:

- How well is the WP achieving what it set out to accomplish?
- Is it doing what it should be doing?

The tools for the activities (Consultation Process, Training, Development IM Toolkit & Policy Brief, Dissemination & Exploitation) will be design around the proposal of the Project management team and Work Package Coordinators.



MANAGEMENT QUALITY CONTROL

The University of Padova (UNIPD) will follow up on the meeting attendance and general commitment by all partners in the course of the contract period. The University of IASI will follow the project's calendar of activities and will see that meeting documentation and successive reports are circulated in due time by the respective partners. Both UNIPD and IASI will equally keep an eye on the timely submission of project deliverables by all partners, which is essential for smooth operational management, and propose measures, if needed, to the project coordinator.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The individual steering committee members are key responsible persons in charge of quality on behalf of the partner institutions. Steering Committee members will engage in the following:

- Meeting attendance: all meetings will be attended by all members or by their delegated representative.
- Meeting preparation and follow-up: each steering committee member will carefully prepare the meetings and be responsible for the implementation of the tasks that will be agreed upon during those meetings as reflected in the meeting reports/to-do lists.

- Financial Management: all steering committee members are responsible for the financial management on behalf of their institution and will periodically report back to the project coordinator as stipulated in the consortium agreement.

QUALITY ASSURANCE TASKS

QUALITY ASSURANCE TOOLS

Key QA tools include:

- Guidelines
- Standard templates
- Face-to-face feedback
- Evaluation forms
- External evaluations / reports

QUALITY ASSURANCE INDICATORS

Indicators are included in the official project Logical Framework Matrix.

QUALITY ASSURANCE MATRIX

Matrix below describes the quality assurance standards for the ICMED project.

Project Process	Quality Assurance Standard	Inputs Include:
Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Objective:</u> verification that Project Schedule Management activities are performed via a documented process. • <u>Project Schedule Management Plan:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project schedule review meetings occur ○ Project schedule review meetings are well attended ○ Modifications to the project schedule are approved and tracked ○ Impact estimations occurring outside of/prior to the schedule modification process ○ Roles and responsibilities are well defined ○ Action items from review meetings are documented and tracked to completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Steering Committee meeting agendas; - Steering Committee meeting minutes; -Steering Committee meeting participants' list and signatures; - internal project website; - monthly update of website & partners (via email and Skype).
Consultation Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Objective:</u> Verification that Consultation Process activities are performed via a documented process. ○ <u>Consultation Process standard documents:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Desk research ○ Staff Questionnaires ○ NEO Questionnaires ○ Students on line Questionnaires ○ Students Quality interview questions ○ Interview results ○ Questionnaire results ○ Consultation summary report ○ Training plan: program and content of each training week including teaching and training material & list of expected training outcomes of each training week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Desk Research Report; -Questionnaires for NEOs; -Questionnaire for Staff; -Questionnaire for Students; -Local Interviews Reports; -Training Weeks Agendas.
Training process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Objective:</u> Verification that Training Process activities are performed via a documented process. ○ <u>Training Process standard documents:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Training week reports (4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Training Weeks presentations made by the trainers; -Training Weeks Materials; -Training Weeks Evaluation Questionnaires; -Signature Lists of trainees and trainers who participated in the TW.

<p>Development of International Mobility Toolkit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Objective:</u> Verification that Development of IMT activities are performed via a documented process. ○ <u>Development of IMT standard documents:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ student guide in English and/or French ○ ready to use templates of: internal calls for application, selections procedures models, documents related to the management of mobility 	<p><i>-Templates/models regarding the application procedures, internationalization strategy, internal calls for application, selection procedures models, documents related to the mobility management;</i> <i>-Double/joint degree agreement template.</i></p>
<p>Development of Policy Brief</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Objective:</u> Verification that Development of Policy Brief activities are performed via a documented process. ○ <u>Development of Policy Brief standard documents:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policy brief for EU 	<p><i>-Policy brief for Algerian Authorities;</i> <i>-Policy brief for Tunisian Authorities;</i> <i>-Policy brief for Moroccan Authorities.</i></p>
<p>Dissemination & Exploitation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Objective:</u> Verification that Dissemination &Exploitation activities are performed via a documented process. ○ <u>Dissemination & Exploitation standard documents:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dissemination Plan ○ Web site ○ Dissemination material ○ Dissemination events & reports ○ Final conference & report ○ Train the trainers event & report 	<p><i>-Dissemination Plan</i> <i>-Web site;</i> <i>-Dissemination material;</i> <i>-Dissemination events & reports;</i> <i>-Final conference programme & report;</i> <i>-“Train the trainers” programme & report.</i></p>
<p>Project Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Objective:</u> Verification that Project Management activities are performed via a documented process. ○ <u>Project management standard documents:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partnership Agreement ○ Project intranet ○ Skype meetings ○ Progress report to EACEA ○ Final report to EACEA 	<p><i>-Partnership Agreement;</i> <i>-Project intranet;</i> <i>-Progress report to EACEA;</i> <i>-Final report to EACEA.</i></p>

ACTIVITIES

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

Internal QA will include the development of the following standard templates/guidelines

- (a) SC meeting reports
- (b) feedback forms for internal evaluation (level of satisfaction, challenges faced, recommendations for improvement)
- (c) travel reports (official EACEA form)
- (d) financial reporting forms (timesheets + staff declarations – official EACEA forms)
- (e) Work Package Reports

It will also include continuous review of progress & partners' feedback.

EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE (PARTICIPATORY)

External Quality assurance mechanisms (participatory process) will include:

Testing of outputs (ex-ante). Target groups will be involved directly in the testing of the outputs prior to dissemination. In particular, IRO staff at partner and associated partner institutions (including HEI networks) will test the outputs of the project targeting IROs (e.g. ICM toolkit, etc.) before they are finalized. At the same time, outputs specifically directed towards students (student guide) will be tested with small group of EU/African students.

Training & Events Evaluation questionnaires (ex-post) will be distributed to target groups at the end of each training week/dissemination event, to assess their satisfaction and gather feedback and possible suggestions for improvement.

In addition to the above, Ex-post QA will aim at measuring the impact of project outputs on target beneficiaries. In May 2019, a questionnaire will be sent out to staff having participated in the training weeks to assess to what extent the information provided/knowledge developed during the events was put into practice. The questionnaire will also investigate whether their HEI has participated in the 2018 Erasmus+ KA107 call and whether the training directly or indirectly motivated them to do so. During the final conference, a similar questionnaire will be distributed to participating staff.

EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

An international external evaluator will be selected, based on an open call, to evaluate the project. He/she will participate in two of the SC meetings (3rd and 5th) and will draft an interim and a final evaluation report. The interim report will be analysed by the SC and required actions will be taken to answer recommendations. The final report will assess the overall effectiveness and first impact of the project.