Quality Assurance Plan

D6.1

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1 OVERVIEW OF ITELAB PROJECT

ITELab (Initial Teacher Education Lab), coordinated by European Schoolnet, is a Knowledge Alliance project between higher education institutions and industry to foster innovation and knowledge exchange in initial teacher education (ITE). It is co-funded under the European Commission's Erasmus+ Programme from January 2017 to December 2019. It involves five pilot universities (IE, IT, NO, PT, UK), four industry partners and one university conducting the evaluation.

Universities and companies will come together in ITELab and work with Ministries of Education, national ICT agencies, regional education authorities and other stakeholders (participating as Associate Partners) to address the issues of how student teachers currently receive training on the pedagogical use of ICT, and the mainstreaming of innovative pedagogical practice that involves ICT. Joining as an Associate Partner will also provide organisations with opportunities to contribute to the development and piloting of course modules for training student teachers on the pedagogical use of ICT both face-to-face and via a MOOC for student teachers

A key benefit for all stakeholders will be the extent to which the project addresses the 'disconnect' between ITE and continuing professional development for teachers. By working closely with teacher educators, ICT suppliers (both project partners and Associate Partners) and policy-makers will gain a better insight into how they can best support new entrants to the teaching profession.

The new open source course modules developed within this project will benefit all ITE educators across Europe. The modules will also be complemented by an innovative MOOC for student teachers. The content will be available in English and translated into Italian, Portuguese and Norwegian in the project. ITELab will particularly provide higher education institutions with recommendations to support innovation within ITE in terms of how it addresses technology-enhanced learning, including recommendations related to the competences that teacher educators themselves will require to prepare student teachers to enter C21st classrooms.

ITELab objectives:

1. Monitoring how ICT is currently used in ITE courses within higher education via surveys and case studies.

2. Establishing a University-ICT Industry Forum within the project where universities are made more fully aware of the broad range of professional development resources for teachers currently available from innovative ICT suppliers and education ministries, so that these can be more widely used and adapted for use within ITE courses.

3. Designing new educational content for ITE, including a massive open online course for student teachers.

4. Extending participation in the ITE forum during the project via both face to face capacity development workshops and online webinars.

By the end of the project, ITELab aims to have:

- Produced 10 case studies on new approaches to integrating ICT in initial teacher education curricula;

- Up to 5,000 student teachers enrolling on ITELab MOOC modules ;

- 50-60 higher education institutions participating in the University-ICT Forum, including 35 ITE providers using the ITELab course modules and adapting their curricula and pedagogy as a result of project recommendations.

- 20 companies participating in the University-ICT Forum directly benefiting from project deliverables and helping to promote the results of the project.

- 15 Ministries of Education actively engaged in the University-ICT Forum and helping to promote the results of the project to a wider group of ITE higher education institutions.

1.1 STRUCTURE AND ROLES IN THE PROJECT

- The project is organised around seven work packages (WP) led by various project partners:

  - WP1: Project Management (led by EUN), responsible for project co-ordination and management;

  - WP2: Case Studies and Monitoring of ICT within ITE (led by EUN), with University of Agder leading on defining competences for teacher educations in year 2 and 3 of the project.

  - WP3: Developing innovative ITE resources and curricula (led by University College of Dublin), including developing the ITELab University-Industry Forum and an online learning hub for students.

  - WP4: Development and Delivery of MOOC for Student Teachers (led by EUN).

  - WP5: Piloting and Evaluation of ITE Courses Modules and MOOC (led by the University of Würzburg), with EUN responsible for the coordination of the pilots within the 5 university partners.

  - WP6: Quality Assurance (led by IRIS Connect).

  - WP7: Dissemination and Exploitation (led by EUN).

- The focus of WP3: Developing innovative ITE resources and curricula, led by University College Dublin (UCD), will be on designing the ITELab framework and developing modules for students that are being prepared to enter primary and secondary-level education: design new ITE modules and a MOOC.

- Drawing on results from WP2: Case studies and monitoring of ICT in ITE, activities in Year 1 (research studies and collating evidence in the area of innovation in education that is widely promoted via the European Schoolnet Observatory), partners will start to analyse how CPD resources identified in the survey, from ICT companies and other stakeholders (participating as Associate Partners), could be adapted for use by student teachers and how new ITE course modules can be developed that prepare student teachers to make innovative use of ICT.

  o A report on this work will be published that includes an initial set of recommendations and details of new course modules that will be developed in the project. The report will be presented to a wider group of stakeholders at the first Capacity Development Workshop at the end of Year 1 along with beta versions of the modules. It will also be revised and updated in Year 2 and Year 3 as the project progresses and tested in the implementation pilots with the partner universities.

  o Feedback from the first workshop will help partners to finalise the course modules which are translated and made ready for piloting with student teachers in five universities.

- In WP5: Piloting and evaluation of ITE course modules and MOOC, a university partner (University of Würzburg) will evaluate and quality assure the course modules and MOOC that will be developed in the project and piloted with student teachers currently enrolled on ITE courses or being trained in 'teaching schools'. Part of the testing involves working with focus groups of student teachers, including a face-to-face workshop in Year 2. There are milestones in M6, M22, M24, M34, M36.

  o Based on the evaluation of the pilots carried out by WP5 and further elicitation of requirements in terms of ITE curricula, partners then plan, develop, pilot and evaluate a second collection of course modules in Years 2 and 3.

2 QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) PLAN

ITELab's QA plan ensures that the project's processes and outputs are monitored and evaluated in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact, while additionally offering an examination of the specific discussion and dialogue practices developed between partners and associate partners in the ITELab Forum.

ITELab's quality assurance methodology allows for regular feedback to inform the day-to-day as well as longer-term functioning of the project. This will encourage a flexible management, coordination and implementation of the project, so that evolving needs can be met and corrective measures taken. The specific mechanisms to be deployed throughout the three years of the project to ensure the monitoring and evaluation of all project processes and outcomes are summarized below.

2.1 QA OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

The objectives of the Quality Assurance (QA) work package (WP6) are to:

- Establish quality assurance procedures for the project as a whole;

- Coordinate the work of a Pedagogical Board that will help ensure that project deliverables and outputs meet the requirements of a wider stakeholder group.

QA procedures will be established at the start of the project and applied to all activities in line with ISO 9000 standards. It will be the joint responsibility of all partners until the complete discharge of all obligations under the project. The main goals of the QA procedures are:

- To document and assess the project's progress;

- To evaluate the contribution of the on-going results to the project's objectives;

- To discover deviations at an early stage, and feed the information to the Project Management Committee, to initiate remedial actions (if necessary) as soon as possible

2.2 QA PLAN: TASKS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To meet the QA objectives and goals, the following elements and processes will be put in place

2.2.1 IRIS CONNECT

The QA work-package (WP6) is led by project partner, IRIS Connect. IRIS Connect is responsible for the QA Plan, and coordinating the quality assurance activities including the work of the Pedagogical Board (PB) and the Independent Evaluator (IE).

IRIS Connect, supported by EUN, will ensure quality procedures are in place to inform and if necessary, adapt further stages of work.

The QA tasks are:

- To coordinate the work of the PB: organise PB meetings, agreeing and sending out the agenda, together with associated content for review and review guidelines, at least one week before each meeting; EUN will provide the administration support for the PB, including the platform for online meetings and face to face meetings, recording and agreeing PB minutes and actions.

- To coordinate the work of the IE; EUN will publish the online surveys of the IE.

- To coordinate with EUN to identify if there are any specific QA issues to be addressed through an online meeting of the WP Leads/project partners/EUN's internal project management committee.

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2.2.2   EUN

EUN will co-develop the QA Plan with IRIS Connect, working with IRIS Connect to help appoint and support the Pedagogical Board and Independent Evaluator.

Project management and contract coordination is carried out by EUN as part of work package 1 (WP1). EUN will ensure financial and quality control, coordinate all management and progress reports and provide these to the EACEA. The way in which the project will handle arrangements and responsibilities for decision making with partners, conflict resolution, reporting, monitoring and communication are described in detail in section III.3 of the detailed project description.

The financial, legal and quality responsibilities of all partners will be set out in the ITELab Consortium Agreement. This document will be drafted at the start of the project, based on the EACEA Grant Agreement and its supporting legal and financial guidance.

Quality assurance procedures applied within WP1 will include qualitative and quantitative assessment measures for milestones and deliverables that will be key elements in following the project's progress: project meetings, reporting and coordination; drafting and review of all deliverables; monitoring and tracking of the project by the project coordinator's Project Management Committee (internal audit, finance, senior management).

2.2.3   PEDAGOGICAL BOARD (PB)

The PB will consist of six independent experts drawn from ITE universities, companies and Ministries of Education not directly participating in the project. They will work in a voluntary capacity, meeting online as necessary to support the iterative development of courses modules and MOOC and particularly to quality assure and review the course modules following the face to face meeting at the Capacity Development Workshop (CDW) each year. Following the CDW each year, the Pedagogical Board's feedback will be taken into account as part of the quality assurance process to finalise the ITELab modules and student MOOC content prior to the translation commencing.

The main tasks and aims of the Pedagogical Board are to:

● Ensure that the course modules and MOOC are well aligned with requirements from a wider group of ITE providers in universities and companies providing CPD resources for teachers.

● Quality assure and review the course modules in M13 and M25 and the MOOC in M14 and M27.

● Contribute to recommendations for innovating ITE curricula.

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● Provide feedback on the operations of the ITELab University-ICT industry Forum and recommendations relating to how it can be further developed after the end of the project.

IRIS Connect will coordinate the work of the Pedagogical Board, with the administrative support of EUN.   The PB will be convened to meet online twice a year, and also come together for three face-to-face meetings taking part in the Capacity Development Workshop (CDW) at the European Schoolnet EMINENT conference, each year.   The agenda and papers for these meetings will be circulated at least a week in advance of the meeting. Minutes from each of these meetings will be recorded.

PB Selection process:

1. A list of potential names for the PB will be drawn up and circulated to partners for additional suggestions.

2. A short list of potential candidates will be drawn to provide diversity and representation from: ITE Universities, Companies, Ministries of Education and education leads (eg school heads, education experts) not directly participating in this project.

3. An invitation email will be sent to this first pass selection, to recruit onto the Pedagogical Board. As participation in the PB is on a voluntary basis, and with other commitments, it is anticipated that not all those who are contacted will be able to commit.

4. Depending on the level of response, a second round of invitations will be sent targeting new participants that will provide the diversity of profile to the PB.

Outputs:

● Minutes from each of the Pedagogical Board Meetings will be recorded, together with the agenda and supporting papers.

● Three reports will be produced by IRIS Connect on the work of the Pedagogical Board summarizing feedback and recommendations from members of this group on how to ensure: that the developed course modules and MOOC meet the quality requirements of a wider group of stakeholders; that the quality of the validation processes in the project are consistently maintained. The minutes of the meetings of the Pedagogical Board will be included as an appendix. (D6.2.1 Dec 17; D6.2.2 Dec 18; D6.2.3, Dec 19)

2.2.4   INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR (IE)

In addition to the work of the PB, as part of the work in WP6, an external Independent Evaluator (an expert with ITE experience) will be contracted to carry out an independent evaluation of both project operations and final deliverables. The role of the Independent Evaluator is to work within the project's quality assurance plan, and will focus on the extent the feedback from the wider group of stakeholders in the

Pedagogical Board has impacted upon and influenced the course development process.

The main tasks and aims of the Independent Evaluator are to:

- Interview the Pedagogical Board members on their perception of the process and how they evaluate their participation in the project - namely, to assess to what extent feedback and recommendations from the experts on the Pedagogical Board have impacted and influenced the course module and MOOC development process.

- Assess whether the protocols for running an evaluation with student teachers have been consistently applied by all five universities involved in the piloting (WP5: Piloting and Evaluation of ITE Course Modules and MOOC).

- Conduct interviews and an online survey with partners and some Associate Partners to collect feedback on the process.

- Provide an assessment of the final project report on the effectiveness of the Capacity Development Workshops.

- Assess the extent to which the project dissemination (WP7) has met the targets set for expanding the University-ICT Industry Forum.

IE Selection process:

1. A call will be made to organisations on European Schoolnet's framework agreement, circulating the requirements for the independent evaluation, with the selection made based on availability, relevant experience and value for money.

2. The Independent Evaluator will be asked to act as a "critical friend" to the ITELab project team reviewing and providing feedback and recommendations related to both project operations and final deliverables.

IE Activities and Outputs:

- Interviews with the Pedagogical Board (PB) following the CDW each year to assess the extent feedback and recommendations have impacted and influenced the course module and MOOC development process.

- Interviews with partners and an online survey each year with Associate Partners to collect feedback on the process and how they evaluate their participation in the project.

- Three reports will be produced by the Independent Evaluator based on the review of project operations and deliverables with the aim of deciding whether project quality assurance processes have been effectively designed and applied. (D6.3.1 Dec 17; D6.3.2 Dec 18; D6.3.3, Dec 19)

3 APPENDIX

The detailed WP6 deliverables and time table are illustrated below.

QA Deliverables	EUN	WP3 Lead - UCD	University of Newcastle	Poly Institute of Santarem	University of Agder	University of Perugia	WP6 Lead - IRIS Connect	SMART Technologies	Microsoft	WP5 Lead - University of	Steelcase	EC - EACEA	Pedagogical Board	PMC	Independent Evaluator	Associate Partners: eg	Timeline
Create QA Plan	x						x										M1
Selection and appointment of PB and IE	x						x										M2, M3
Consortium Partner Meeting (6 F2F meeting, plus online/briefings)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		F2F (M3, M5, M10, M13, M16, M22, M26, M29, M36...)
Organise PB online (O/L) and F2F meetings							x										O/L & F2F (M6, M12, M13, M19, M23, M25, M30, M36)
PB Review and QA of Course modules							x				x						M11, M12, M13; M23, M24, M26
PB Review and QA of MOOC							x				x						M11, M12; M23, M24
PB Contribute to recommendations for innovating ITE Curricula							x				x						M12; M24
PB Provide feedback to the operations of the ITELab University-ICT industry Forum										x							M12; M24; M36
IE Conduct interviews with the PB members															x		M13; M25
IE Assess protocols for running and evaluation of the pilots of course modules and MOOC at all 5 universities															x		M13; M25
IE Conduct interviews and an online survey with partners, and some associate partners															x		M6; M17; M29
IE Assessment of final project															x		M36
IE Assessment of the dissemination															x		M36
Organise online meeting with WP Leads to review QA issues that need to be addressed, as identified							x										M12; M24; M36
Review QA procedures of EUN coordination project management							x										M12; M24; M36
Provide input and review into the development of content	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		X	M5-M10; M18-M24; M30-M36
ITELab University-Industry Forum - partners and associate partners, including national/regional education authorities. Online	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					x	M6; M13; M18; M20; M24; M30; M36
Piloting of modules and MOOCs with students		x	x	x	x	x										x	
CDW 1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		M12
Report from the IE														x			M11; M23; M36
Report on PB activities							x										M11; M23; M36
CDW 2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		M24
Report from the IE														x			M11; M23; M36
Report on PB activities							x										M11; M23; M36
CDW 3	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		M36
Report from the IE														x			M11; M23; M36
Report on PB activities							x										M11; M23; M36

ITELab *- Innovating ITE curricula*