PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN

ENHANCING AND VALIDATING SERVICE RELATED COMPETENCES IN VERSATILE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN WESTERN BALKAN UNIVERSITIES (E-VIVA)

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY OF TIRANA

APRIL, 2019

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Project reference no. – 598307-EPP-1-2018-1-AL-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

INTRODUCTION

This project is supported by the European Union Erasmus+ Programme and led by the European University of Tirana with a consortium of 16 partners. This project addresses Erasmus + KA2 CBHE priorities: Recognition of Qualifications and Qualification Framework. This is a regional priority for the Western Balkans, meaning it is a cumulative priority for all countries. Moreover, an added value is that for Albania and Bosnia and Hercegovina, this is also a national priority for CBHE projects.

Service-related competences are becoming an important aspect in non-formal and informal learning setting however, their integration in HEI learning approaches is quite new. Thus, the project presents a new engagement of HEIs into an innovative qualification framework of social-related competences. Considering that none of the Balkan Countries has a previous experience in validating qualification framework of service related competences, the project includes all WBC, represented by two HEI each. Following the European path, Partner countries are evolving into a service-based society. Hence professional lives are increasingly determined by concepts such as:
- customer orientation,
- sectoral and international collaboration
- the need for continuous learning to adapt to rapidly changing demands.

Consequently, values and competences like:
- external (customer) orientation,
- team work/ cooperation
- social competences necessary for effective management in the service sector
are becoming competitive factors at the job level and as such aspired competences both for employment and societal reasons.

Most important outputs will be:
-> Validation of service-related competences
-> IT-based system to create and validate learning outcomes
-> Validation and creation of service-related with an IT-based Assessment and Evidencing system.

Project duration: 15/11/2018 – 14/11/2021

PROJECT MANAGEMENT APPROACH

e-Viva consortium is established based on issues of quality assurance, formalized with a partnership agreement which ensures the credibility and interaction among members and set the ground of a common methodology in managing the project and the division of tasks.

Based on this, the project will create the following bodies and structures:

A Steering Committee (SC). The SC will be composed of representatives from each partner and will ensure that any difficulty that can emerge could be identified and duly addressed in order not to compromise the implementation of the project. The SC will try to prevent and resolve conflicts within the consortium.

The project manager participates in the SC as Secretary without right to vote, responsible for:
• Monitoring progress according to the project management plan.
• Reviewing and approving changes made to project resource plan, schedules, scope, goals, cost estimates, etc.
• Making strategic decisions regarding the prioritization of project deliverables and approving interim deliverables.
• Reviewing and approving the project development strategy.
• Resolving conflicts between stakeholder groups

Working Groups (WG), will have a specific role in managing technical Work Packages. The project has 7 Work Packages. Each of the WP have delegated leader responsible for its overall coordination. These leaders are selected based on their relevant experience, and except for management and dissemination WPs that are to be leaded by the Lead Partner (the Applicant), all other WP leaders are institutions from Programme Countries - as follows:
- WP1: Uni Duisburg-Esssen
- WP2: Blinc eG, Germany
- WP3: University NOVA Lisbon
- WP4: dieBerater
- WP5: dieBerater
- WP6: UET
- WP7: UET

The project leader (UET) coordinates WP6 and WP7, manages the whole consortium, ensures an effective communication between partners and the EU Commission, meets the obligations in terms of budget and reporting periods. Responsibilities between the Lead Partner UET and all WP leaders will be distributed as follow: Lead Partner UET will coordinate the overall content of the project together with WP leaders, whereas WP leaders will be responsible for coordination of activities and partners within WPs. The responsibilities of each partner will also be defined with the Partnership Agreement.

Besides the described above, other management activities include:
– Two evaluation reports (progress and final) will be prepared by UET as the Lead Partner and then reviewed and approved by the SC, focusing on the quality of the work done and quality of project deliverables.

Project Scope

Overall objectives:
e-VIVA aims at the creation of a blended learning approach to facilitate and validate competence developments related to service orientation in rather informal learning contexts in higher education institutes and workplace learning contexts.
It will contribute to evidencing those competences that are of fundamental importance in the service economy and that are acquired to a large extent in non-formalised learning contexts.
With its approach to combine Higher Education and professional practice, e-VIVA will contribute to an improved transparency of the acquired competences in a transnational comparative approach. Nevertheless, it will provide learning and validation opportunities in highly contextualised and individualised learning settings. With this it will also open up new learning pathways and eventually also lead to a better matching of learning contents and individual learning styles (preferences).

Operative Objectives:
A) Research on existing (ICT-supported) approaches to create and validate service-oriented skills and competences
e-VIVA will be focusing on identifying and analysing approaches how innovative pedagogical approaches to assess evidence and validate skills and competences can foster the permeability between Higher Education and professional practice.

B) Developing and refining overarching ICT-based assessment and validation systems
e-VIVA will develop a cross-cutting educational approach to create, access and evidence learning outcomes as innovative validation method suitable for diverse learning pathways and competences.

C) Enriching existing validation and certification systems
e-VIVA shall be linked with existing, EQF-based validation and certification systems.
e-VIVA learning projects shall focus on the following domains and include also internships and mobility activities:
- extracurricular activities in higher education including internships,
- learning activities at the workplace or in non-formal trainings and
- personal and skill and competences development in practical learning settings such as traineeships and/or internships and learning in mobility
- career counselling activities in the respective universities, including the Alumni association when relevant.

D) Applying a rich competence development and validation software for service-related skills and competences
In the framework of e-VIVA, powerful web-based learning and validation platform will be applied for a number of 300 (10 HEI *30) licenses in WBC enabling learners and validators to evidence developments of service-related personal and social skills in a process-oriented way.

E) Piloting and Evaluation
The e-VIVA assessment and evidencing system for service related competences shall be piloted in a cross-cutting educational approach covering all Balkan Countries and 3 European member states + 1 new Programme Country (North Macedonia)

F) Addressing large numbers of learners and stakeholders
To reach a high sustainability and transfer potential the project results and outcomes shall be largely disseminated to different target groups and professionally valorised.

Milestone List

The below chart lists the major milestones for the e-VIVA Project. This chart is comprised only of major project milestones such as completion of a project deliverables per Work Packages. If there are any scheduling delays which may impact a milestone or delivery date, the project manager must be notified immediately so proactive measures may be taken to mitigate slips in dates. Any approved changes to these milestones or dates will be communicated to the project team by the project manager.

Deliverable Name	Start	End
WP1 Preparation	15/11/2018	14/11/2019
D1.1 Research guidelines & instruments	15/11/2018	15/02/2019
D1.2 National research reports (5)	15/11/2018	15/02/2019
D1.3 Transnational research report	01/03/2019	15/10/2019
D1.4 E-VIVA Survey	01/03/2019	15/10/2019
WP2 Development - Competence-based learning approach	15/02/2019	15/07/2020
D2.1 Manual and descriptive pattern of the learning project/activity	15/02/2019	15/07/2019
D2.2 Inventory of sub-competences	15/02/2019	15/07/2019
D2.3 Reference Systems	15/07/2019	15/10/2019
D2.4 Didactic frame	15/07/2019	15/10/2019
D2.5 Competence framework	15/07/2019	15/10/2019
D2.6 Learning Objects and Modules	15/07/2019	15/10/2019
D2.7 Catalogue of suitable assessment systems	15/07/2019	15/10/2019
D2.8 Evidencing and documentation	15/07/2019	15/10/2019
WP3 Development - Training and counselling of HE staffs	15/10/2019	15/11/2020
D3.1 Staff training packs (learning outcomes, methodology, materials)	15/10/2019	15/02/2020
D3.2 Staff training and counselling (5)	15/06//2019	15/09/2020
D3.3 Implementation report	15/09/2020	15/11/2020
WP4 Development - Piloting the Competence-based learning approach (incl. Validation) of competences developments, accreditation and certification - Piloting the open learning approach in accompanied traineeships and work teams	14/08/2019	14/10/2021
D4.1 Learning agreements	14/08/2019	14/10/2019
D4.2 Learning phase/Traineeship	14/08/2019	14/10/2019
D4.3 Interim Evaluation		14/03/2020
D4.4 Assessments		14/11/2020

D4.5 Rating of the learners		14/11/2020
D4.6 Certification		14/07/2021
D4.7 Experience reports		14/08/2021
WP5 Quality and evaluation	15/11/2018	14/11/2021
D5.1 Evaluation Plan		28/02/2019
D5.2 Internal process evaluation -interim		14/11/2019
D5.2 Internal process evaluation -final		14/11/2021
D5.3 External evaluation report		
WP6 Dissemination and exploitation of the project results	15/11/2018	14/11/2021
D6.1 Development of project visual identity and project promotional instruments		14/11/2019
D6.2 Dissemination Strategy		14/08/2019
D6.3 Conference or Journal papers submission		14/11/2021
D6.4 National Info day		14/11/2021
D6.5 Transnational dissemination conference		14/08/2021
D6.6 Interim report on dissemination and exploitation		14/05/2020
D6.6 Final report on dissemination and exploitation		14/11/2021
WP7 Management	15/11/2018	14/11/2021
D7.1 Steering Committee and Advisory Board	15/01/2019	14/11/2021
D7.2 Progress project report	1/10/2019	15/12/2019
D7.2 Final project report	1/09/2021	14/11/2021

WORK BREAKDOWN STRUCTURE

Refer to Gantt Chart for e-VIVA project – Annex A

Change Management Plan

The following steps comprise UET's organization change control process for all projects and will be utilized on the e-VIVA project:

- Step #1: Identify the need for a change (Any partner)
  Requestor will submit a change request / official email to the project manager
- Step #2: Log change in the change request register (Project Manager)
  The project manager will maintain a log of all change requests for the duration of the project – She can use the Gantt Chart for this purpose.
- Step #3: Conduct an evaluation of the change (Project Manager, Project Team, Steering Committee)
  The project manager will conduct an evaluation of the impact of the change to cost, risk, schedule, and scope
- Step #4: Submit change request to Project team and Steering Committee (Project Manager)
  The project manager will submit the change request and analysis to the SC for review
- Step #5: Steering Committee decision
  The SC will discuss the proposed change and decide whether or not it will be approved based on all submitted information
- Step #6: Implement change (Project Manager)
  If a change is approved by the SC, the project manager will update and re-baseline project documentation as necessary as well as ensure any changes are communicated to the team and stakeholders

All change requests will be logged in the change control register by the Project Manager and tracked through to completion whether approved or not.

MEETINGS FOR THE PROJECT

The project management involves two types of meeting: face to face and online meeting.
Face to face meeting are a combination of management meeting (steering committee) and training sessions. The meetings are described in the WP3 and WP7 and are budgeted for each partner in the project budget. Minutes of the meeting are distributed accordingly.

Online control meetings are planned periodically, the audio of online meetings will be recorded and published in the project platform available to partners.

PLANS FOR THE PROJECT

Communications Management Plan

Please refer to communication plan adopted for this project

Cost Management Plan

The Project Manager will be responsible for managing and reporting on the project's cost throughout the duration of the project based on the input provided by contact persons for each partner in the project and as detailed in the Partnership Agreement and the budget. The Project Manager will present and review the project's cost performance during the scheduled online and face to face project meeting as well as provide status update emails regularly.

All budget authority and decisions, to include budget changes, reside with the EACEA as outlined in the grant agreement and guidelines for us of the grant.

Procurement Management Plan

The Project Manager will provide oversight and management for all procurement activities under this project with a team appointed at the European University of Tirana.
The tender procedures for equipment hardware will take part in national level, decentralized by the project leader.
The tender procedures for equipment software will be centralized (the procurement process only) while the payment/purchase will be individual by each partner (except UNSA).
All procurement will be in line with grant agreement and guidelines for us of the grant. The procurement process for software and hardware will be decided by SC open voting.

Quality Management Plan

Please refer to quality plan adopted for this project. The Quality Plan involved the monitoring and evaluation processed of the project.

Risk Management Plan

Every effort will be made to proactively identify risks ahead of time in order to implement a mitigation strategy from the project's onset. The most likely and highest impact risks were added to the project logical framework to ensure that the assigned risk managers take the necessary steps to implement the mitigation response at the appropriate time during the schedule.

Upon the completion of the project, during the closing process, the project manager will analyze each risk as well as the risk management process. Based on this analysis, the project manager will identify any improvements that can be made to the risk management process for future projects. These improvements will be captured as part of the lessons learned knowledge base.

Gantt Chart E-Viva Project

Timeline: 2018 (November, December) | 2019 (January–December) | 2020 (January–December) | 2021 (January–November)

Deliverable Name	Start	End	Duration (working days)	Lead	Partners
WP1 Preparation	11/15/2018	11/14/2019		Uni Duisburg-Essen	All partners
D1.1 Research guidelines & instruments	11/15/2018	2/15/2019			
D1.2 National research reports (5)	11/15/2018	2/15/2019			
D1.3 Transnational research report	3/1/2019	10/15/2019			
D1.4 E-VIVA Survey	3/1/2019	10/15/2019			
WP2 Development - Competence-based learning approach	2/15/2019	7/15/2020		Blinc eG, Germany	All partners
D2.1 Manual and descriptive pattern of the learning project/activity	2/15/2019	7/15/2019			
D2.2 Inventory of sub-competences	2/15/2019	7/15/2019			
D2.3 Reference Systems	7/15/2019	10/15/2019			
D2.4 Didactic frame	7/15/2019	10/15/2019			
D2.5 Competence framework	7/15/2019	10/15/2019			
D2.6 Learning Objects and Modules	7/15/2019	10/15/2019			
D2.7 Catalogue of suitable assessment systems	7/15/2019	10/15/2019			
D2.8 Evidencing and documentation	7/15/2019	10/15/2019			
WP3 Development - Training and counselling of HE staff	10/15/2019	11/15/2020		University Nova Lisbon	All Programme Country partners (trainers) All partners from Partner Countries (participants)
D3.1 Staff training packs (learning outcomes, methodology, materials)	10/15/2019	2/15/2020			
D3.2 Staff training and counselling (5)	2/15/2020	9/15/2020			
D3.3 Implementation report	9/15/2020	11/15/2020			
WP4 Development - Piloting the Competence-based learning approach (incl. Validation) of competences developments, accreditation and certification - Piloting the open learning approach in accompanied traineeships and work teams	8/14/2019	10/14/2021		dieBerater	All partners
D4.1 Learning agreements	8/14/2019	10/14/2019			
D4.2 Learning phase/Traineeship	8/14/2019	10/14/2019			
D4.3 Interim Evaluation		3/14/2020			
D4.4 Assessments		11/14/2020			
D4.5 Rating of the learners		11/14/2020			
D4.6 Certification		11/14/2021			
D4.7 Experience reports		11/14/2021			
WP5 Quality and evaluation	11/15/2018	11/14/2021		dieBerater	all partners
D5.1 Evaluation Plan		2/28/2019			
D5.2 Internal process evaluation -interim		11/14/2019			
D5.2 Internal process evaluation -final		11/14/2021			
D5.3 External evaluation report					
WP6 Dissemination and exploitation of the project results	11/15/2018	11/14/2021		UET	all partners
D6.1 Development of project visual identity and project promotional instruments		11/14/2019			
D6.2 Dissemination Strategy		8/14/2019			
D6.3 Conference or Journal papers submission		11/14/2021			
D6.4 National Info day		11/14/2021			
D6.5 Transnational dissemination conference		8/14/2021			
D6.6 Interim report on dissemination and exploitation		5/14/2020			
D6.6 Final report on dissemination and exploitation		14/11/2021			
WP7 Management	11/15/2018	11/14/2021		UET	all partners
D7.1 Steering Committee and Advisory Board		1/15/2019			
D7.2 Progress project report		5/14/2020			
D7.2 Final project report		11/14/2021			