

Newsletter Issue 1 Summer 2016

Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of the EQTeL project newsletter which is devoted to the sharing of knowledge about e-learning, quality assurance accreditation on other relevant topics. In this edition we would like to tell you a bit about our project, what we have achieved so far and about up-and-coming events our partners are involved in.

On [our website](#) you can find more information about this three-year project, co-funded by the EU TEMPUS IV. The partnership, its goals and what has been achieved so far are described in detail.

About the EQTeL Project

EQTeL (Enhancing Quality of Technology-Enhanced Learning at Jordanian Universities) is a three-year project co-funded by the EU Lifelong Learning Program, TEMPUS IV. The project started in December 2013 and will finish in November 2016. The partnership is made up of 13 members: 5 from EU countries (Belgium, Finland, Italy and Spain) and 8 from Jordan. EQTeL is coordinate by Princess Sumaya University of Technology (JO); alongside prominent Jordanian universities, the Jordanian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the Higher Education Accreditation Commission and the Association of Arab Universities, are involved in the whole process.

The partnership is made up of a collection of organisations that have had significant experience in higher education, quality assurance, accreditation criteria, degrees equivalence etc.

The project aims to improve the quality and relevance of technology-enhanced learning at Jordanian higher education institutions and to enable the country's easier inclusion into European Higher Education Area. The main objective is to improve, develop and implement accreditation standards, guidelines and procedures for quality assurance of TeL courses and study programmes at a national level.

The partnership has already met twice in Amman:

- 17-18 March 2015: First Baseline Analysis and Capacity Building Meeting hosted by

Princess Sumaya University for Technology at its premises;

- 12-13 May 2015: Mid-Term Project Meeting hosted by Higher Education Accreditation Commission and PSUT at their premises.

The EQTeL partnership is finalizing the TEL Quality Assurance Framework and is building 3 pilot courses. All the material will be available on the project website <http://eqtel.psut.edu.jo/Home.aspx>.



Spotlight Training Events

Using UOC (Fundació per a la Universitat Oberta de Catalunya) facilities, AQU Catalunya (Agència per la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya) organized a study tour for a delegation of Jordanian representatives on 15 and 16 of June 2015 as part of the training activities embraced by the Enhancing Quality of Technology-Enhanced Learning at Jordanian Universities (EQTeL) project.

The Jordanian delegation was represented by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the Higher Education Accreditation Commission, and several Jordanian universities. The event addressed quality assurance issues from both universities perspective and quality agencies perspective. Day 15 of June started with an explanation of the AQU Catalunya tasks, followed by speeches on Internal Quality Assurance System Evaluation, External Evaluation Processes (Accreditation), and the Key Indicators System (UNEIX). In the afternoon, AQU members presented a survey

on Catalan universities graduates' employability.

On 16 of June, speeches focused on evaluation of eLearning institutions from internal and external perspective, and UOC eLearning technological infrastructure. This is the first training activity organized under the umbrella of EQTeL project.



Upcoming Events

Training by EU experts for Higher Education and Accreditation Commission (HEAC) and HEI representatives will be held in Amman, Jordan, in the period 26-27 May 2016. Training will focus on internal quality assurance and quality culture and new aspects of practical approaches in ESG that address eLearning, in addition to QA procedures for multimedia production. Furthermore, training will include teacher professionalization in university pedagogics and course design from the competency-based education perspective: how to define learning outcomes, teaching and learning, assessment methods and teaching all in line with each other as well as the concept of constructive alignment as a tool for quality management.

Previous Events

Baseline Analysis and Capacity Building Meeting



Princess Sumaya University of Technology hosted a meeting in the period 17-18 March 2015 for baseline analysis and capacity building. Its main focus was on the need to enhance and consolidate cooperation between Jordanian universities and their

European counterparts and to improve quality in technology-enhanced learning in Jordan. Pilot courses were selected and specialized committee were formed in order to carry out future activities.

Quality Assurance Meeting



On the 21-22 July 2015 Università degli Studi Guglielmo Marconi (USGM) hosted a delegation of Jordanian partners at its premises in Rome for the Quality Assurance Meeting.

A proposal for a symposium entitled 'Games and Virtual Worlds' submitted by a team of EuroVersity partners was accepted for presentation at the [EUROCALL 2014 conference](#) (GRONINGEN, Netherland, 20-23 AUGUST). The project will contribute three papers briefly summarized in the symposium abstract: 'The Euroversity Good Practice Framework and its application to minority languages and elder learners'. The first paper presents the process of creating the Good Practice Framework (GPF) itself and the methodology used to evaluate it and demonstrates how the framework was implemented in the new courses in a variety of different situations. The principles that have been employed to make these courses successful are being explored. Data collected from the evaluation of the courses are reported.

Paper 2 discusses a number of potential and real obstacles for using virtual worlds in minority language teaching and evaluates the GPF from the epistemological point of view of an endangered minority language speaking community. The authors conclude that the obstacles experienced by users of computer assisted learning models such as infrastructure or lack of information can, to some extent, be overcome. On the other hand, obstacles experienced by e.g. an indigenous learning community may involve so many compounding factors independent from the educational context that providing a course design or examples of good practice is not enough to attract the

community to the virtual learning environment.

The third paper explores the opportunities and challenges of designing a virtual social communicative space for language learning for the target group of elderly learners. The experiences with applying the Euroversity GPF are reported related to design considerations particularly for this population segment. The great range of needs and abilities is distinguished by sub-groups and compared with other segments such as people with disability.

The analysis is informed by an interview with A. Krueger, founder of Virtual Ability Inc. and by observation of Virtual Ability Island (VA) in Second Life. One of the target group specific recommendations resulting from the analysis of virtual learning spaces design is to include support for the learners to draw on life experiences and to foster a two-way transfer of lessons learned, between the virtual world and the physical world.

Find the abstract listed in the [full programme here](#)

Publications

Open University of Catalonia and Yarmouk University, in the person of Eulalia Canals and Amenah I. Al Rawashdeh were involved in the publication of "Developing online English language courses in Jordanian Higher Education: prospects and challenges of the first pilot experience" an article that will be presented at the EUROSLA 26 Conference 2016. More details at: <https://www.jyu.fi/en/congress/eurosla26>

Project Partners



Princess Sumaya University of Technology – JO

www.psut.edu.jo/



Fundació per a la Universitat Oberta de Catalunya – ES

www.uoc.edu



Università degli Studi Guglielmo Marconi

Università degli Studi Guglielmo Marconi (USGM) – Italy

www.unimarconi.it



Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research - JO

www.mohe.gov.jo



Higher Education Accreditation Commission - JO

www.heac.org.jo



The University of Jordan – JO

www.ju.edu.jo

Yarmouk University - JO

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Hashemite University - Jo

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