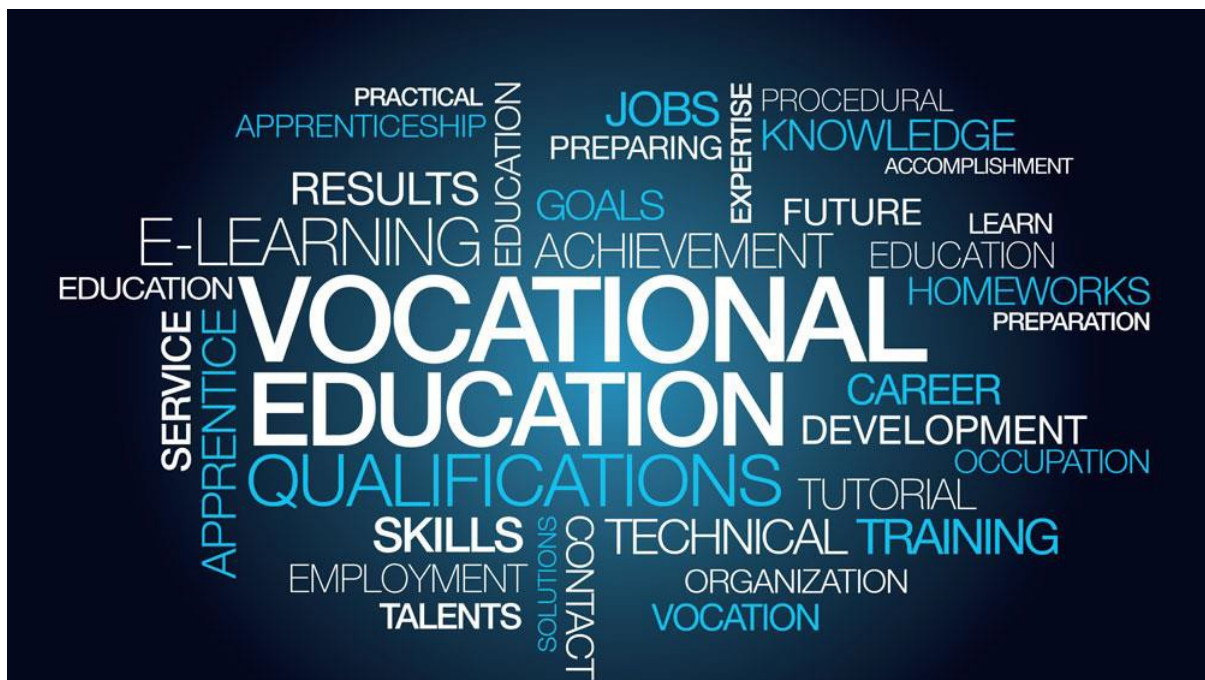


Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education (CBHE)

QA Evaluation Report on Core Curricula PC Module Development – Part A

QA Evaluation Report on First Piloting (conducted in Laos and Vietnam Summer/Autumn 2018) – Part B



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission and officially started with a Consortium Kick Off meeting in Ho Chi Minh City in March 2017 (see official program under section “Events” on catalyst-erasmus.com).

Part A - QA Evaluation Report on PC Core Curricula Module Development

For focus, we need to reiterate that the CATALYST project supports the development and implementation of a comprehensive pedagogical Core Curricula, using an ECTS/Tuning Modular design for university vocational teaching for Vietnam and Laos.

Two non-EU Countries are involved.

- Vietnam
- Laos

Five EU Partners are involved:

- University Politehnica of Bucharest (UPB), Romania
- Technische Universität Dresden (TUD), Germany
- The Pyramid Group (TPG), Germany
- Edge Hill University (EHU), UK
- Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT), Ireland

The Core Curricula is aimed at implementing significant changes to the existing pedagogy because its breadth, scale, quality and relevance means that it will be the first program of its kind held in these countries to address the training and development needs of staff teaching in university vocational teacher training. As such, it is deemed to be a program in great need for these particular PC countries. The package consists of 12 modules with Module 1 now divided into two parts: 1a and 1b.

These modules are developed according to ECTS Guidelines as this additional internationalizing character is seen to promote effective dissemination and sustainability. It was further agreed that all the modules would be piloted separately in both countries. This allows for cultural differences in the implementation to be taken into consideration, and for a bespoke curriculum to be devised that supports end-project sustainability.

Each module has four documentary parts (outlined below) which are the templates created by the EU colleagues.

1. CATALYST 1 - ECTS Module Description focusing on learning outcomes
2. CATALYST 2 - Weekly aims & teaching instructions for trainers
3. CATALYST 3 - Module materials folder
4. CATALYST 4 - Module Teaching Record (in other words “What happened? What was done in class during the piloting process?)

These were distributed to PC partners.

Below is an overview of the modules for Piloting 1, Piloting 2 and Piloting 3 of the Core Curriculum.

No.	Short Description	Responsible EU-Partner
1a	Communicative Approach (CA) for General Vocational Education (Communicative approach versus traditional approach in the classroom and use of oral skills for presenting, lecturing, public speaking.)	EHU
1b	Communicative Approach (CA) for Vocational Language Education Training	TUD and TPG

2	ICT/Blended/E-Learning based vocational teaching and learning approaches	EHU
3	Innovation methodology in vocational teaching and learning (including the use of the internet/library/media centre for lesson development and implementation).	LIT
4	Examination and Assessment Creation (Monitoring and evaluation of examination creation and assessment.) Note: <i>This is a new title and was agreed by EU and PC partners at the UK training event in Nov 2018.</i>	UPB
5	Recognition and validation of language skills in line with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Key languages are English and German.	TPG/TUD with German from UPB
6	Language learning for vocational education purposes for internships and employment (CVs, letter of applications, interviews for domestic and international development in ASEAN block)	LIT/TPG/TUD
7	Teaching for diversity in vocational education for individuals with special needs and including a focus on intercultural awareness. Here teaching strategies will be designed to be fully inclusive, incorporating strong differentiation and the necessity to address special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) at vocational level.	LIT
8	Professional Development & Reflection	EHU
9	Quality Assurance and Planning in vocational education (including observation, self-assessment techniques)	EHU

Supplementary Modules

Module 10: ESP Pathway Program Module – English for Specific Purposes Training in Vocational Education (terminology, soft skills, key writing skills) A package for PCs based on in-depth need analysis will be developed and will be integrated into official university curricula for weaker staff and domestic/international students as a Pathway Program.

Status: Ongoing. (To be used as a QA Mechanism to support participation in the project's aims and objectives.)

Note: EU partners responsible are TPG and TUD

Module 11: Catalyst Core Curricula Strategic Planning for Sustainability and Dissemination in Vocational Education

Supports the use of ECTS and EU Tuning Frameworks in Modular Creation Official Accreditation Process for Core Curricula including Inter-University Module Recognition Agreements. (Enables participants to participate in modules not offered by a specific institution and to gain transferable ECTS points, thus employing best BP practice).

Note: EU Responsible is TPG and TUD for ECTS and EU Tuning frameworks in Modular Creation but Official Accreditation Process for Core Curricula including Inter-University Module Recognition Agreements will be discussed and trained collectively by all EU partners at planned meeting in Spring 2019. This will include starting the accreditation procedures for the modules in Laos and Vietnam, as discussed in UK training in November 2018.

Module 12: Introduction to Basic Vocational Writing Skills (business correspondence, emailing) TPG/TUD for Piloting 2

This is a very comprehensive module that is being developed by TUD/TPG to be used for the 2nd Piloting in 2019 by HUST.

The following table illustrates the Core Curricula Creation Teams which are charged with piloting, dissemination and sustainability in tandem with the home institution Project Publicity Officer:

No.	Institution	Key Person	Email
1	HCMUTE	Duong Thi Kim Oanh	oanhdtk@hcmute.edu.vn
2	HUTECH	Nguyen Lan Huong	nl.huong@hutech.edu.vn
3	HUST	Ngo Phuong Anh	anhbkh@gmail.com
4	ULIS	Vu Hai Ha	haiha.cfl@gmail.com
5	UTEHY	Nguyen Huu Hop	huuhop78@gmail.com
6	VUTED	Bui Thanh Hoa	bui Thanh Hoa.skv@gmail.com
7	NUoL	Bounseng Khammounty	bounseng@fe-nuol.edu.la
8	UHS	Ketkesone Phrasisombath	ketkesonp@gmail.com

Module	HCMUTE	HUTECH	HUST	ULIS	UTEHY	VUTED	NUoL	UHS	Remark	EU module contact
Module 1A	Duong Thi Kim Oanh	Nguyen Lan Huong							Pilot	EHU
Module 1B		Nguyen Lan Huong		Vu Hai Ha					Pilot	TUD/TPG
Module 2		Nguyen Lan Huong			Nguyen Huu Hop		Phannavong Bounphasouk	Ketkesone Phrasisobath	Pilot	EHU
Module 3	Nguyen Vu Lan				Nguyen Huu Hop				Pilot	LIT
Module 4	Duong Thi Kim Oanh			Vu Hai Ha					Pilot	UPB
Module 5			Ngo Phuong Anh			Bui Thanh Hoa			Pilot	TUD/TPG/UPB
Module 6			Ngo Phuong Anh				Mounlasane Thavisone	Kouherr Waxeng	Pilot	LIT/TPG/TUD
Module 7	Nguyen Van Tuan							Ketkesone Phrasisombath	Pilot (General information)	LIT

									& awareness)	
Module 8					Nguyen Huu Hop		Bounseng Khammou nty		Pilot	EHU
Module 9						Bui Thanh Hoa		Outhip Sounthavong	Pilot	EHU
Module 10				Vu Hai Ha			Xayyacha ck Sounvorav ong		Pilot	TUD/TPG
Module 11						Bui Thanh Hoa	Bounseng Khammou nty		Pilot (Training in ECTS)	TUD/TPG

Note:

Yellow highlight is the Module Leader.

The Catalyst modules were initially produced over the summer of 2018 by the above teams. For the PC teams, this was a very challenging task requiring additional months to complete them all. Related issues were the newness of the concept of a communicative approach, the use of ECTS, numerous difficulties in devising the module descriptors and the other templates, and significant cultural differences.

It was decided that in the November UK meeting (12–16 November 2018), a full parallel Core Curricula Creation consortium would work in teams to add finishing touches to the 11 modules and to evaluate them together at the EHU campus. After arrival, a recap of the project aims and objectives and an agenda discussion, the Core Curricula Creation Teams got to work. Not all module leaders were present, and it was apparent that some colleagues had left the project altogether, thus causing further prolonging of the creation of the modules. It was further agreed that all module descriptions would be common for all universities in both Laos and Vietnam.

In addition to engaging with the input from EHU, the Core Curricula Creation Teams worked closely on the modules during the afternoons of Monday November 12, Tuesday 13 November and Wednesday 14 November.

On 15 November, there was a full day of QA feedback on all modules introduced by the PC teams, with personalised feedback from the EU colleagues. A number of key issues were common to most of the modules:

- ECTS distribution and understanding of workload (not to be confused with contact hours, home-task studies, etc. It was recommended that more Tuning training was needed as masterclasses.
- Learning outcomes – these needed to be revised to be more specific and achievable
- Overly theoretical content. PCs were advised that this is a communicative-approach curriculum. EU partners underlined that there had to be significantly more participant input, a reduction in teacher talk, and an increase in the number of student activities. With this approach, the amount of ECTS can be readily expanded to reflect a newer, more effective, curriculum.

- Modules 4 and 5 need more EU training inputs. After detailed discussion, it was decided to change the title of Module 4 to the better-understood *Examination and Assessment Creation*. The old title was *Monitoring, and Evaluation of Examination Creation and Assessment* and it was agreed that this was misleading in relation to the project's objective.

The Core Curricula Creation Teams were asked to make necessary adjustments on Friday 16 November and a request was made from the EU partners for all updated documents to be presented to EHU in Limerick at the management meeting on 19 November 2018. This was duly done. On 20 November, all the modules were reviewed and final recommendations by EU partners were given. The deadline for the new completion by Laos and Vietnam partners was agreed by EHU as 30 NOVEMBER. Due to unforeseen circumstances in the PC institutions whilst revising these, the actual submission date moved to mid-December. Moreover, further complications lay in the fact that the file sent needed to be unpacked by IT services at EHU.

The modules were then sent out to EU partners in January 2019. Each EU partner will review their modules and will provide feedback to EHU. The final feedback for Laotian and Vietnamese partners will be given in February 2019. Drawing on advice from other EU projects, we believe it is best to upload the modules on to the website only after the second piloting. Thus, any interested stakeholder will be able to access them from this period.

In addition to the module revisions the Core Curricula Creation Teams were conducting at EHU, there were several parallel workshops and teaching sessions for the remaining participants (with a view to each

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activity being shared with the other group). These included presentation workshops on blended learning, on pedagogical support for further developing and sustaining the module content and on exploiting education's potential to positively transform lives, and a full day on academic quality assurance (given by Tony Turjansky, Director of Quality Assurance, EHU, and Kelly Hand, Head of Operations, Academic and Quality Assurance). Further information on these sessions can be seen below.

The essential components of effective QA of degree programmes were considered. European Standards and Guidelines were introduced and compared to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, both being used in British universities and other HE providers to assure standards.

The ECTS Tuning model for ECTS-based degree programmes was again introduced as a follow-up to the Dresden training in March 2018. The key areas of the tuning model were introduced for consideration when designing, implementing and delivering ECTS-based degree programmes, and individual packs were provided that contained a handout of the ECTS tuning model. Learning outcomes and competence for a degree programme were also analysed and evaluated. A comparison of ECTS and UK credits was made. Two UK credit points equate to one European ECTS credit point.

The Dublin-level descriptors of the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF EHA) were compared and consideration was given to how they align with national qualifications, such as the UK Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). There was also a focus on how level descriptors are used to design

learning outcomes for student assessment and the how ECTS credit points are awarded.

The QA day also underlined the importance of student feedback and student involvement in the quality assurance processes. An example of the National Students` Survey was presented to support this argument.

Further workshops on technology-enhanced learning were also given. On Thursday, November 16, Scott Farrow (an educational technologist at EHU) presented a workshop session on ICT/Blended/E-learning focusing on strategies for achieving assessment. Different classroom technologies based on apps including Kahoot, Plickers, Jigspace and Edpuzzle were introduced and tried out, and their use in the classroom was demonstrated.

In addition, the TPG & TUD produced an informative QA PowerPoint on QA in Vocational Education in EU (51 slides). This was presented to the PC partners, along with the two components of the new Module 12 (this is still a work in Progress but will be a full script with supporting answer key).

Part B - QA Evaluation Report on First Piloting (conducted in Laos and Vietnam Summer/Autumn 2018).

The First Piloting was conducted in Laos and Vietnam over the summer and early autumn. It was not originally planned but owing to the challenging situation, some lessons were actually observed by EU partners namely EHU in Laos and TUD in Vietnam. All institutions were

visited and in addition masterclasses were delivered and/or National PC Project Status Conference event training was undertaken.

Concerning the Tutor Evaluation forms pertaining to the First Piloting, 12 were collected from Vietnam and 4 from the modules piloted in Laos. The predominant message was that the material and the teaching approaches are **very new and extremely challenging for PC partners**, which feeds in to the EU Observation Reports.

No non-project HEI guest questionnaires were received by EU partners from PC partners and it was recommended that this situation should change for the Second Piloting.

[EHU \(P4\) Piloting 1 Observations in Laos](#) [August 31-September 12, 2018](#)

Note: EHU produced a full observation report as did TU Dresden for Vietnam. The following is a general conclusion summary

The teaching observations illustrated strong pedagogical knowledge in some instances and instructors aimed to cater for the inclusion of all students. However, there is an identified need for the instructors to focus more on differentiated outcomes and assessment. Much of the teaching involved a didactic approach and although this worked well at times there were occasions when more group work would have facilitated greater opportunities for discovery learning and for the development of student autonomy. Where applicable, instances of students working through activities in groups often produced evidence of meaningful learning. A

communicative approach was adopted in many sessions, but it was felt that the balance was still heavily in favour of teacher-led delivery. Good practice, such as this, should be developed in line with the project's aims.

The modules were piloted well, but the ECTS system and the module content is very new for the colleagues in Vietnam and Laos; therefore, more time is required on this. The three-pilot concept of our project is good foresight and essential, as is our EU experts' decision to have project time extended to fulfil objectives fully. The modules in the first piloting are also quite short and whilst this may suit the wider curriculum these will need to be developed further for the next piloting; in particular, by elaborating on the content.

There were difficulties with internet connection and the Wi-Fi in one institute did not work at all, leading to the instructors reverting to alternative methods of delivery. It was felt that this is particularly problematic as technology-enhanced learning will be heavily constrained. This should be addressed at the institutional level.

All participants in Vietnam and Laos have an open and healthy attitude to professional development and this could be seen through the change in teaching approaches as the piloting progressed. There is also strong evidence that the previous training in Dresden (Germany), in Bucharest (Romania) and in Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam) has had an impact on pedagogy, and it is envisaged that professional development will continue beyond the piloting event. In support of this, bespoke masterclasses were held that identified teaching needs and areas for development to build on previous training.

In relation to the logistics of the piloting, it was felt that the travel should be broken up as long-haul flights have a particularly detrimental effect on working capability.

TU Dresden (P2) Piloting 1 Observations in Vietnam

September 9 – 23, 2018

This is a to-the-point summary report based on the Piloting 1 core curricula observations conducted by TU Dresden in 6 locations in Vietnam in the above time period. The actual observation forms used, report and itinerary program (demonstrating which institutions piloted the various modules) can be accessed for a more detailed insight into the Piloting conducted (here we used, but adapted, the EHU observation form).

Firstly, given the missed deadlines for the submission of the modules with their 4 component parts the Piloting visit was certainly appropriate. As this is a new experience for Vietnamese partners participating in their first EU Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education process, we understand that colleagues required more time together to complete the parts and with the necessity to adhere to a module format.

Overall, the Communicative Approach was satisfactorily used, although this will take more time for both students and tutors to get used to.

Issues that were brought up requiring resolution were:

- For the ECTS Module it would be more appropriate for trainers to present participants with a clear objective, give them input on what ECTS is, and then get them to develop a real lesson plan with the desired learning outcomes. Focus on practice as well as theory.

- We need to see more extensive development of module descriptions, training guides, materials folders and lesson plans in terms of content, detail or simply formatting to validate a new curriculum.
- At each institution we repeatedly stated that the above modules with the four component parts in their complete form need to be forwarded by the Vietnam Regional Coordinator to EHU immediately, as deadlines have failed.
- The module titles in all cases must comply with the officially agreed module titles as agreed during the training in Dresden meeting in March 2018.
- Although lesson participants seemed motivated some sessions had elements of scripted reality.
- Standard formatting of module documents, e.g. font size, layout, etc. necessary throughout as agreed in March 2018 meeting. This can be achieved by more effective communication between the Module Leaders and their respective teams.
- Separate Module Descriptions were requested by Vietnamese and Laos colleagues at the March 2018 meeting in Dresden. These separate formats should now be adhered to.

Specifically observed is the following as preparation for 2nd Piloting:

- Module 4 - Further training on examination creation and assessment necessary (general and language) in cooperation with Saxon Ministry of Education expert.
- Module 5 - The focus of this module is CEFR is recognition and validation. Although this lesson was very good in terms of communicative approach and the recap of knowledge on CEFR from previous lessons, further compatibility with module objective

was not clearly evident. Writing essays does not really play a role here.

- Overlap between Module 6 and 8 needs to be eliminated.
- In ECTS Module it was underlined during the meeting in Dresden 2018 (Germany) and even in Bucharest 2017 (Romania) that participants need to study ECTS Guide in depth. All participants require additional ECTS training. Confusion in terminology which is being passed on to future generations needs to be avoided. Some elements of ECTS, etc. came through very well but more needed to be accomplished. In particular we noted confusion between module objectives & learning outcomes. The EU observers in all cases made this correction.
- Inter university communication was an issue brought up frequently by partners particularly commenting on a North-South divide. Each university needs one person to assume overall responsibility.
- CEFR can be better understood using a comparison with Vietnamese system & IELTS.
- In some cases, we noted unfamiliarity with both the Management Plan and the Dissemination & Exploitation Plan & QA link.
- Persons who had attended all training showed very strong grasp of project objectives and on CA.

[EHU \(P4\) Piloting 1 Observations in Laos September 1–12, 2018](#)

The piloting of the modules for the universities in Laos took place between 1st and 11th September 2018. The observations focused on pedagogy and curriculum delivery and involved teaching staff from Faculty of Engineering at the National University of Laos (NUoL) and Faculty of Medicine at University of Health Sciences (UHS). The observations of the module piloting began at UHS and ended with masterclasses in NUoL once the piloting ceased.

Two academics from Edge Hill University conducted the observations of the modules in both institutions. The two academics also delivered masterclass sessions that were responsive to the needs highlighted in the observations. Overall, the teaching was delivered to a good standard, with room for improvement lying mostly on the communicative aspects of the delivery. The participant teachers were clearly trying new strategies and evidenced much foresight in their planning. Thus, the participants were committed to their teaching and personal development and accommodated the observers in both a professional and courteous manner. Whilst it is noted that there are areas for pedagogical development, it was clear that progress was being made in relation to the designing of the modules. However, the modules were unfinished and thus this will need to be addressed before the second piloting.

Issues that were brought up requiring resolution were:

- The finalising of the modules had been delayed and previous deadlines had been missed; therefore, it was recommended that the partners work on these as soon as possible and should liaise with other partners in the project.
- Resources could be developed to reflect greater opportunities for embedding technology
- ECTS was a concern and in addition to feedback at the time, it was felt that the institutions would benefit from further input on using this in planning; therefore, this was covered again at a later date in EHU. The module descriptions need developing further to increase the number of hours for each.
- A communicative approach was evident in some teaching, but it was felt that, on the whole, this would need expanding.

- The formatting of the modules needed addressing as there was inconsistency throughout. It was recommended that the instructors should work together, and that the institutions should collaborate with other partners.

A full report on this piloting is available separately.

Conclusions

As can be observed above, when we reflected on the core curricula development process, and the actual teaching employed, we see that this is a life-changing project which presents real challenges for the EU and PC partners.

We are trying to produce a new curriculum in Laos and Vietnam, utilizing a communicative approach that heavily conflicts with the current teacher-led approach. We feel that this is important because, as the GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - <https://www.giz.de/en/html/index.html>) stated in our project rationale, vocational students deserve a decent education that equips them for their future careers.

Overall, the objectives set are plausible, and it is satisfying that there is a 2nd and 3rd Piloting. Necessary adjustments to both the core curricula modules and the actual CA teaching approaches have been undertaken at our very useful and successful UK and Ireland meetings in November 2018. This will continue into January and February 2019 with more detailed feedback from the EU partners.

It is the unanimous, strong, advice from the EU pedagogical experts that as this project started six months after the projected time, the possibility to extend the project by this time would be greatly beneficial for all those involved. This would enable the project to demonstrate full achievement of its goals, thereupon generating greater potential for sustainability and providing value for money to the EU taxpayer.

Finally, the following piloting events have been planned:

Second Piloting Plan

- Vietnam: January-May 2019
- Laos: October-January 2018/19

Third Piloting Plan

- Vietnam: August-December 2019
- Laos: January-June 2019

A second National PC Project Status Conference will take place in 2019.