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Quality Assurance Plan



Erasmus+ CBHE project

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**Development of Aquaculture and Fisheries Education
for Green Deal in Armenia and Ukraine: from
education to ecology**



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Table of content

Introduction.....	3
Distribution list.....	3
Purpose of the Quality Assurance Plan (QAP).....	3
Quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation	4
Framework.....	4
Monitoring timetable and methodology	5
Quality of project deliverables	5
Quality of document-based deliverables	6
Quality of Meetings	6
Quality of organisation of AFISHE events.....	7
Quality of promotional materials.....	7
Quality of project websites and social media.....	7
Quality of project management	8
Quality report timeline.....	8
Internal quality control and monitoring.....	8
External quality control and evaluation	8
Evaluation and final revision of new Master's Degree Curricula	9
Annexes	9

Introduction

Quality management is an essential process in all spheres of business life. It is not only proved by the growing number of publications on quality assurance but also by the requirement of contractors to implement such activities.

Quality management is more than an externally-imposed obligation. It is an inseparable part of project management, ensuring the quality of project processes and results. Therefore, all projects funded by the European Commission include quality management.

Distribution list

Partner	Acronym	City/ Country
ARMENIAN NATIONAL AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY	ANAU	Yerevan, Armenia
SVEUCILISTE U DUBROVNIKU	UNIDU	Dubrovnik, Croatia
UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO	U.PORTO	Porto, Portugal
SLOVENSKA POLNOHOSPODARSKA UNIVERZITA V NITRE	SUA	Nitra, Slovakia
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA	NAS RA	Yerevan, Armenia
SCIENTIFIC CENTER OF ZOOLOGY AND HYDROECOLOGY OF THE NAS RA (Affiliated Entity)	SCZHE	Yerevan, Armenia
SUMY NATIONAL AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY	SNAU	Sumy, Ukraine
THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING	NUWEE	Rivne, Ukraine

Purpose of the Quality Assurance Plan (QAP)

This document is the first deliverable from Work Package 6. The scope of this Quality Plan is to define, implement and maintain a set of management structures to coordinate and monitor all project management activities. The fundamental purpose of QAP is to ensure the highest quality of the Project by reducing and managing risks, identifying weaknesses and presenting them to all stakeholders, determining mechanisms for improving and filling gaps, and tracking the Project's actions and accomplishments.

The Quality Assurance Plan aims to monitor the partners' general satisfaction and ensure that the project activities are developed within the agreed timetable and with the agreed quality according to the framework set to achieve the expected milestones and results. The QAP is also addressed to the internal (students, teachers, administrative staff) and external (fish farmers, any centres and/or companies connected to the aquaculture and fishery) stakeholders, directly and/or indirectly non-directly connected to the AFISHE project.

More in detail, the quality assurance plan aims to ensure that all partners contribute the necessary documents and information to the correct development of the Project.

In summary, the project Quality Assurance Plan aims to:

- Create confidence in the quality of the work that the consortium will perform by showing how the Project will be carried out, measured, monitored, accounted for and safeguarded during and after development,
- Define roles and responsibilities, with emphasis on the required skill sets to address the complexities and risks of the Project,
- Show how changes and problems can be identified and reported,
- Clearly define the content, format, sign-off and review process, and responsibilities for each output,
- Make visible all the means that will be applied to meet the technical and quality requirements.

Organisation: WP6 will be led by the SUA Nitra. During the first kick-off meeting, the Project Coordination Team (PCT) established the Quality Assurance Team (QAT). QAT will formalise a Quality Assurance Plan within the first month, which will be approved by PCT. All partners will be involved according to their participation in the monitoring activities.

Quality Assurance Team	
Name and Surname	Partner
Radovan Kasarda (WP Leader)	SUA Nitra
Jaroslav Andreji	SUA Nitra
Susanna Hayrapetyan	ANAU
Arusyak Harutunyan	NAS
Armine Hayrapetyan	SCZHE
Augusto Faustino	U.PORTO
Vlasta Bartulović	UNIDU
Oleksandr Mykhalko	SNAU
Olha Biedunkova	NUWEE

Each member of QAT will present the results to their individual university's project team regularly. Both internal and external quality control and evaluation will be implemented during the Project.

To make it more transparent and ensure the quality of the project Project Advisory body (PAB) will be formed. Every partner country (AM, UKR) will have its own PAB. PAB is made up of the following members: one representative from each partner university who is not a team member of the project; one representative from the labour market or associated partners; one representative from the Ministry of Education and/or Ministry of Agriculture (total – 4-5 members). PAB will discuss the project's progress, identify weaknesses and strengths, and advise and consult on policy issues. In addition, every six months, PAB will update PCT on the project's progress. PAB members will attend all meetings and events arranged in the relevant country.

Quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation

Framework

Establishing a framework for the Project is to effectively carry out all management activities, monitor the Project for current and future risks, and avoid negative effects. Quality Assurance will ensure that all the

activities, resources and objectives planned in the proposal are correctly executed, used and achieved. The quality assurance plan developed early in the project (M1) and approved before M4 will be implemented along the project lifecycle. Reports on the progress will be provided every six months (questionnaires and individual and group interview techniques to identify partners' perceptions and issues that may arise will be used) to ensure timely completion of the work and early anticipation of problems and the support of the external evaluation.

The quality of the AFISHE project activities and results will be monitored through a continued assessment of the achievements against the agreed schedules. This will include regular reviews of the project, the successful delivery of project activities, outputs, communications plans, dissemination and exploitation targets and all other aspects of project delivery. WP leaders will be responsible for reporting on reaching milestones, deliverables, and task completion. The main instruments we will use our questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, group discussions, and reports. These monitoring tools will be developed by QAT and collected by SUA Nitra as responsible for the project's monitoring and evaluation.

The interim reports will provide information on the evaluation activity carried out during the previous months to assure the quality of the work actions and the resources and other outcomes produced. In addition, they will include feedback on past project activities and recommendations for future activities. The final report will be delivered at month 36 and will provide information on the evaluation activity carried out during the project and the results of these actions.

Monitoring timetable and methodology

Quality of project deliverables

The deliverables of AFISHE may be classified into tangible deliverables such as reports, publications, manuals, methodology, plans, presentations, printed and electronically available promotional material, and media articles, as well as intangible deliverables in the form of organised events (training, workshops, coordination meetings, conferences, etc.), developed and launched project website, social media, etc. The following tables indicate milestones to be reached and deliverables to be produced from the approved project proposal connected with the presentation or publication.

An informative timetable of milestones

WP	Milestone	Milestone Name	Month
1	MS1.1	Project kick-off meeting	2
	MS1.2	Midterm report	18
	MS1.3	Monitoring Reports by National Erasmus+ Offices of AM and UKR	18,36
	MS1.4	End of the Project	35
2	MS2.1	Benchmarking report	3
	MS2.2	Developed LOs and Curricula	6
	MS2.3	Module programs	6
3	MS3.1	Develop the Training plan	16
	MS3.2	Implement the training of teaching and non-teaching staff	21
4	MS4.1	Equipment Procurement/Tendering	12
	MS4.2	Research infrastructure Access Agreement	12
5	MS5.1	Application to national authorizing body (MoESCS of Armenia and MES of Ukraine) for the license and/or accreditation of to implement Master's Degree Programs	16
	MS5.2	Program accreditation and/or licensing	21
6	MS6.1	Quality assurance report	18
	MS6.2	External evaluator's 1st report	18
	MS6.3	External evaluator's 2nd report	36
7	MS7.1	Dissemination and Communication Plan	2
	MS7.2	Launching of project webpage implementation	2
	MS7.3	Project management 6th meeting and dissemination event in Ukraine	32
	MS7.4	Project management 7th meeting and dissemination event in Armenia	35

An informative timetable of deliverables

WP	Deliverable	Deliverable Name	Month
1	D1.1	Meetings' minutes developed; regular, midterm and final reports developed.	18,36
2	D2.1	Developed LOs, curricula and modules in aquaculture and fishery Master's Degree in line with Bologna process.	6
3	D3.1	Trained teaching staff on new modules, interactive and practice-based teaching methods and tools.	21
	D3.2	Trained teaching and non-teaching staff on how to operate in the laboratories.	21
4	D4.1	Laboratories on aquaculture and fishery at AM and UKR universities	12
5	D5.1	Approved and accredited Master Degree programs by the state authorities in AM and UKR.	18
	D5.2	Teaching and learning materials	24
6	D6.1		4
	D6.2	Reports and recommendations about quality assurance and project progress	18,36
7	D7.1	Bases for Joint/Double Master Degree programs between participating universities	35
	D7.2	Sustainable network of the universities and labor market	35
	D7.3	Project webpage and social media pages	3
	D7.4	Dissemination plan, dissemination activities resulting in raised knowledge on project activities and achievements among internal and external stakeholders	2,12,24,35

A common quality expectation for all deliverables is their relevance to reach the overall and specific objectives, with a further focus on their development efficiently and effectively. Timely delivery following the project work plan as identified in the Application Form is expected.

Quality of document-based deliverables

A consistent and standard format for all document-based deliverables (Word documents, PowerPoint presentations) is to be followed by all partners using templates worked out by WP1.

All templates are adopted to ensure a common appearance of deliverables and that a minimum amount of information will appear consistently in all documents produced by the project. This is irrelevant to deliverables that, by their nature, need a different format (i.e. project brochures, newsletters).

When partners produce studies and publications as deliverables, they must put the EU logo consisting of the sentence "Co-funded by the European Union" on the cover or the first page (Grant Agreement, 17.2).

Quality of Meetings

Meeting requests: Meetings will be organised and scheduled by contacting all team members. Meeting dates should be agreed upon and pre-announced at least 2 (two) weeks beforehand. The respective team leader is responsible for initiating meeting organisation. Meetings will be collocated when possible to minimise partners' expenses and travel time.

Participants in meetings: A pre-determined number of team members from each partnering organisation is required to attend meetings as prescribed by the project proposal and project plan. All meeting participants are required to participate in a cooperative manner. If a planned participant cannot attend a meeting, the organiser must be informed beforehand and/or provide a substitute member to take their place.

Meeting Agenda: Meeting agendas are prepared by meeting organisers. A meeting agenda must be distributed to all participants 14 (fourteen) days before. Meeting participants may suggest additional items to be added to the Meeting Agenda 5 (five) days before the start of the meeting. The consortium can add new items to the agenda during the meeting following a unanimous decision.

Meeting minutes: Meeting minutes will be distributed within ten business days following the meeting by the team leader of the organising partner. All decisions become binding after they have been recorded in the meeting minutes and the meeting minutes have been accepted by the participants.

Quality of organisation of AFISHE events

All events organised by project partners during the project should be managed professionally. The organisers should provide in due time a complete information package to the participants, including the draft agenda, study visit guide or a note on the logistics (informing about travel arrangements, venue, suggested hotels, etc.). Time for preparation activities depends on the type of event, e.g. several months for study visits or conferences and several weeks for training. This obligation is defined as a separate task for the host institution/partner.

The meeting organisers ensure smooth registration processes, the implementation of the arrangements respecting the appropriate time for event sessions and breaks, and the availability of all necessary materials (e.g. meetings, training and promotional material). The organisers will also ensure the recording of the minutes of the meetings in a concise style, including a list of action points. Where appropriate (e.g. for training), feedback forms will be distributed among participants, and the responsible partner will prepare event reports related to feedback forms. Powerpoint presentations should be prepared using an appropriate template created by WP1. All documents by project partners will be prepared on the project-designed document template.

Based on the obligations of the beneficiaries, related to information requirements, the partners shall inform the public, press and media (internet included) of the event, which must visibly indicate “Co-funded by the European Union”, as well as the graphic logos of the AFISHE project. Furthermore, posters, roll-up and other promotional materials shall be displayed during the event.

Quality of promotional materials

Communication and dissemination activities of the AFISHE project will adhere to the Dissemination and Exploitation Plan of the project. All promotional materials will reflect the visual identity of the project and the Erasmus+ Programme.

WP7 is responsible for the design and distribution of all promotional material. The draft version will be sent to all partners for comments and suggestions before printing, publishing and distribution. In addition, the materials will be disseminated by all project partners at relevant events to reach the project's target group.

Quality of project websites and social media

The project envisages setting up the public AFISHE website (<https://www.afishe.eu/>). In addition, the AFISHE online platform (google drive) will be created to be accessed by all project partners to keep all project documents and deliverables in one place. It will be the single reference point for the project documentation and communication among partners. WP1 and WP7 will be responsible for setting up and maintaining the AFISHE website with all information and materials received from project partners.

Moreover, a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100088132460870>) – either in the form of a fan page, will be established to ensure the project's visibility in the social media sphere. The partners will continuously update all representation tools and are intended to communicate activities and project results effectively.

All partners are asked to promote the AFISHE project on their universities' websites and other social media channels (such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram profiles/groups, newsletters, LinkedIn, etc.) by providing a short description of the project, logo, project events and link to AFISHE website. All tools will be implemented with high performance, good functionality and stability, emphasising the maximum reach and awareness of the target audience.

Quality of project management

The project management structure was established at the project's Kick-off meeting to ensure effectiveness, decisiveness, flexibility and quality of work. At the Kick-off meeting, Project Coordination Team (PCT) was also established, where all project partners have representative members and their deputies.

The PCT will review the activities and decide on any necessary contingency measures in the reorganisation of tasks and resources – as usual, with a strong focus on the project impact. The project management will be transparent and flexible but also strict enough to ensure the implementation of the project activities to achieve the project's objectives. The WP1 leader is responsible for the administrative part of the project and, in collaboration with the WP6 leader, the preparation of internal reporting.

Each partner is equally and independently responsible for assigned activities, money use and reporting. Contact persons have the responsibility for the local management.

Quality report timeline

Every six months (M6, M12, N18, M24, M30, M36), the quality assurance responsible person of each university will review the implementation process and achievements in a specified format. The results, at first, will be discussed at the university, presented to the Project coordinating university (ANAU), and then discussed at a forthcoming project meeting.

Internal quality control and monitoring

QAT will implement internal quality control and monitoring.

QAT will implement internal quality control and evaluation according to the quality plan. It will be implemented through online and offline questionnaires, direct meetings, and discussions.

After each meeting, all participants will receive online questionnaires about achievements, expectations cover, strengths and weaknesses, gathering guidelines for improving the quality of future meetings.

Every six months, the quality assurance responsible person of each university will review the implementation process and achievements in a specified format.

The results, at first, will be discussed at the university, then presented to the Project coordinating university (ANAU), and then addressed in a forthcoming workshop. In addition, the project coordinator will ensure that all partners actively participate in WP6 by providing feedback and filling in the templates used to assess the project activities' quality.

Reports and recommendations about quality assurance and project progress in M18 and M36 are the second deliverables of Work Package 6.

External quality control and evaluation

Associated partners, competent ministries connected to education and agriculture, and NEO's (National Erasmus+ office) will perform external quality control and evaluation.

The Project quality assurance team members will meet with NEO Armenia, NEO Ukraine, and associated partners regularly and be invited to a meeting in the provided nation.

Aside from the external quality control mechanisms indicated above, ANAU will hire an external evaluator to objectively assess the Project's overall development.

For additional external quality control, ANAU will hire an external evaluator for the project's overall evaluation (as part of WP6).

The project's overall evaluation by an external expert will be carried out two times: the first in the middle of a project and the second before the final report. The expert will be responsible for the evaluation of work done in all participating institutions. The external overall project evaluator will be selected based on understanding HEI systems in partner countries, EU project laws and implementation, methodology, management strategies, and cost-effectiveness. The candidate will be selected on a competitive basis. The payment will be made based on actual work by the expert.

Evaluation and final revision of new Master's Degree Curricula

During the pilot of the master's degree program, the AFISHE team, as well as the universities, will collect the necessary data about the Project, which will make it possible to know the strengths and weaknesses of the master's degree program. Furthermore, opinions will be collected from students, lecturers, representatives of the ministries, and specialists in the aquaculture and fishery field. Based on the collected data, the programs will be analysed and evaluated, as a result of which (if necessary) the necessary changes will be made. The master's degree programs will be finalised.

Annexes

- a. Annex 1.: Evaluation questionnaire N.1 – Project coordination team

Annex 1. Project evaluation and monitoring report content

- a. Clarity of meeting objectives
- b. Participation
- c. Relevance
- d. Role of participants
- e. Content
- f. Materials
- g. Facility
- h. Suggestions for improvement

- b. Annex 2.: Evaluation questionnaire N.2 – Curricula and modules evaluation
- c. Annex 3.: Evaluation questionnaire N.3 – Training activities - trainees
- d. Annex 4.: Evaluation questionnaire N.4 – Training activities – trainers
- e. Annex 5.: Project evaluation and monitoring report content

Annex 5. Project evaluation and monitoring report content

Contents of the project evaluation and monitoring report:

- a. Cruciality of the project activities
- b. The efficiency of the project realisation
- c. Project achievements (results)
- d. Impact of the project measures (follow-ups)
- e. Sustainability of the project results. Periodic surveys and feedback analysis of target groups.
- f. Communication process between consortium partners
- g. Dissemination of the project activities and results
- h. The project management