

DELIVERABLE 2.1

QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN

FINAL

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List of Abbreviations

ITSM	Information Technology Service Management
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises

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Executive Summary

The main goal of this document is to specify the quality monitoring system which provides assistance to control the project as well as the provided training. Quality management shall ensure the best results possible within a reasonable time frame, target-performance accordance and the rapid identification of weaknesses, failings or other undesirable development concerning contents as well as financial issues.

Therefore, basic guidelines on how to present project results, especially in the context of an EU-funded project, are outlined to ensure a homogeneous presentation of the consortium. Those guidelines recommend treating each result that is presented outside the consortium as a deliverable. This includes not only official documents that are listed in contract but any project-related communication in any form, and hence apply the defined review process, which of course has to be adapted in a useful way to the deliverable according to the type of the deliverable, its size and content. Project management monitors the appropriate application of the review process.

In order to continuously monitor the resulting trainings and the project work, the principles of the knowledge scorecard are applied by defining reasonable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for both the training sessions and the project work, which are regularly assessed.

In case of training assessment, each training session provides a questionnaire to the participants and the trainer addressing the defined KPIs. KPIs are structured according (a) useful outcome of the training, (b) appropriate organisation, (c) profile of participants and trainers and (d) appropriate infrastructure. Feedback is collected and presented to the organisers of the training as well as to the project management to create a common understanding and trigger improvement actions.

In case of the project assessment, the project management continuously assesses the status of the project reflecting the defined KPIs either by questionnaires or by common discussions at partner meetings. KPIs are structures according (a) project outcome and impact, (b) project management and organisation, (c) partner communication, (d) project tools, resource and budget consumption. Monitoring results and corrective actions are communicated by the project manager in form of periodic reports, project review or other appropriate communication channels.

1 Introduction

The main goal of this document is to specify the quality monitoring system which provides assistance to control the project as well as the provided training. Quality management shall ensure the best results possible within a reasonable time frame, target-performance accordance and the rapid identification of weaknesses, failings or other undesirable development concerning contents as well as financial issues.

Chapter 2 introduces guidelines to ensure a homogeneous presentation of results; hence each form of presenting a project result is interpreted as a deliverable that has to follow a minimum level of quality assurance.

Chapter 3 discusses briefly the principle layers of a knowledge scorecard, which is applied to monitor the quality of the training sessions. Beside a short introduction on the quality monitoring process, the first set of KPIs is introduced with respect to the four layers of a knowledge scorecard. Required statistic information is mentioned that needs to be covered in the questionnaires. This chapter ends explaining the upcoming use of the defined KPIs.

Chapter 4 elaborates the usage of the knowledge scorecard also for monitoring and assessing the project as an additional instrument for the project management. First the relevant KPIs for the project are introduced before the project monitoring process is described.

Chapter 5 concludes this document by stating how the guidelines and the KPIs are used within the project.

2 Quality Assurance Guidelines for Results

Results of the project are the interface to interested users; hence the quality and the key messages of any material that is produced from the project must follow certain quality criteria and follow a review process. By nature there are different types of results that are presented in different way like textual documents, presentations, oral speeches, software or complete training sessions. This chapter reminds that any material that is handed out has to be treated as a deliverable and therefore must be compliant with the style and the review process to assure a certain level of quality and remind each partner that any material provided must contribute to the key message of the project and hence support the targeted impact of the European Commission.

2.1 Deliverables as Project Results

Deliverables are any project outputs that are either contractual (cf. Chapter D.4.2. EXPECTED RESULTS of the Application Form) that are submitted to the European Commission for reviewing the progress of the project or any provision of result to anybody outside the project consortium.

Hence we understand with the word deliverable not only the contractually defined reports submitted to the European Commission but any output that is clearly identifiable – e.g. by using the project web-site, using the project logo, acronym or templates or give in any other way the impression that results of the project are presented.

This wider definition of the term “deliverable” ensures that only commonly agreed and quality assured results are presented to the public independent if these are training materials, documents, courses, software, samples or any other form of result presentation.

The project management board sets up a panel of internal reviewers from the project partners and maintain a list of individuals on that panel. To support the production of deliverables, the project executive will maintain deliverable release schedule. This schedule will take into account the due dates of deliverables and the time taken for the quality assurance procedure.

2.1.1 Review Procedure

Each project output has one and only one responsible partner as presented in the Description of Work or detailed in additional documents from the project management. This partner organisation nominates only one person that will authorise the deliverable as suitable for submission to the quality control process and collects all parts from sub-authors to compile a common result and submit it to the review process or return it to the authors for revision.

The Project Manager makes an allocation between two and three reviewers to deliverables depending on the type and size of the deliverable in advance. To ensure the timely progress of the document review process, partners are advised to contact the document reviewers well in advance of the document review process and involve them early in the preparation of the document.

Rules

- The relevant deliverables are listed together with the responsible partner and the reviewer on the following wiki page:
https://ebi.plan.io/projects/itsm4sme/wiki/Result_Responsibility_and_Reviews
- The responsible person has to contact the internal reviewers in advance to inform about status of the deliverable and availability of the reviewers, considering the type and size of the deliverable.
- Deliverables have to follow the document nomenclature
- To prepare the review process, every lead editor has to decide to either select a formal review process by adding a new folder for his deliverable in the common file directory with the extension \9_Internal Review\; or use an informal review by changing the deliverable name accordingly (this is described in the document nomenclature).
- In case of a formal review process, reviewers and consolidator have to use and fill in the review report document provided by the project management. In addition reviewers can also add their comments directly in the document, but have to ensure that is clearly named

Reviewer

Reviewer 1 and 2 will independently assess the quality of the deliverable and recommend its acceptance or make suggestions for its modification. Acceptance must be by the unanimous agreement of the document reviewers. On acceptance the names of the document reviewers will be placed on the cover pages of the deliverable.

Consolidator

The consolidator and reporter – either the 2 or 3 reviewer - will be nominated principal reviewer and will consolidate the reviews by each of the reviewers into a coherent response to the authors. On acceptance of a deliverable by the reviewers, the deliverable will pass for final approval to the project management team. This final acceptance will only address adherence to project compliance with respect to templates, style, key messages other quality control issues but not related to the content of the deliverable.

2.2 Special Result Types

2.2.1 Documents

Documents are well known types of deliverables in EU-projects as they summarize not only the findings of the research work and hence act as a publication instrument, but also act as a project controlling instrument to monitor the performance of the project. Documents have to follow the provided project templates and from a legal point of view include the copy right statements as well as licence agreement on how to use the text. Included pictures must be checked, whether they are allowed to be used in the document or not.

From a content point of view, documents have to (a) explain the core essentials in a maximum of one page as an executive summary, (b) provide the content introducing references with respect to

other deliverables within the project and relevant sources outside the project, (c) present the content in a clear and understandable way also for readers that are not members of the consortium or part of the European project research community and therefore briefly introduce relevant pre-existing know how although this content is explained in other deliverable. The goal is to produce complete and easy readable documents to readers outside the consortium.

2.2.2 Publications

If you have a publication such as for a peer-reviewed journal or for conference proceedings, then approval is **needed** before anything is published. Authors need to submit the draft-publication before submitting the camera-ready version for publication to provide sufficient time for approval by the Consortium representing the interests of all partners and for the European Commission to raise any objection. Publications need to have a legal notice:

“This work has been supported by the ITSM4SME project (www.itsm4sme.eu) and has been partly funded within the European Commission’s LEONARDO Programme under contract number DE/13/LLP-LdV/TOI/147665. This paper expresses the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the European Commission. The European Commission is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained in this paper.”

2.2.3 Presentations

Presentations are typically slides or in case other media are used like videos or any form of animation the guidelines for presentations have to be followed as close as possible. Similar to documents the copy right statement and terms of use has to be clearly presented. In case the presentation is used during a training or talk, additional material in form of notes, additional slides, or any other appropriate form has to be added to the presentation material to enable a person that did not physically join the presentation to receive nearly as much of the information as if physically attending. It is clear that physical participation enables much more intensive communication and knowledge exchange, that can hardly be compensated, but presenters have to provide materials in such a way that the reader receives added value by downloading the presentation. This may be achieved by additional comments or notes, by additional slides, screen shots, videos or by referring to other material.

In oral presentation, speakers must take care not to infringe on the rights of other partners, for example by revealing sensitive or confidential information. If in doubt the speaker has to check with the Project Manager or with the partners concerned. The key messages of a talk must be presented in slides and additional material, so each partner can verify by analysing the presentation material, if partners’ interest or the interest of the European Commission might be conflicted. Each presentation has to clearly acknowledge the support of the European Community. Contact details of the project and the speaker must be clearly identified on each of the used materials or slides. Additionally the following disclaimer is mandatory:

“This work has been supported by the ITSM4SME project (www.itsm4sme.eu) and has been partly funded within the European Commission’s LEONARDO Programme under contract number DE/13/LLP-LdV/TOI/147665. This presentation expresses the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the European Commission. The European Commission is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained in this presentation.”

2.2.4 Oral Speeches and Agreement

Oral transfer of project results or agreement between partners is a fast and efficient way to proceed with the project. In case an oral discussion, speech or agreement is performed, all participating partners have to ensure that:

- All participating persons are aware of the intension of oral commitments and each partner has the corresponding rights to agree or disagree;
- All participating persons have the possibility to comment or withdraw from their orally presented commitments or agreements within 5 working days.
- Each oral agreement has to conclude with an agreed written executive summary that contains of a maximum one page indicating the topic, date, participants and a summary of the key findings.
- Oral speeches are documented by also providing an executive summary with a maximum of one page that indicates the key messages. Additional material that was used to prepare the talk, abstracts or prepared notes can be added to complete the package.

In oral speeches the disclaimer that the project is supported by the European Commission, does not express the opinion of the EC and hence the EC is not liable for any use of the provided information has to be provided in an appropriate manner.

2.2.5 Software

The form and licence in which software is provided, entirely depends on the owner, who gives software or licence to any third party. Hence the way how software can be downloaded and installed, the supported environments like operating systems, the terms of use and licences are decided by the providing partner only.

Software may be used by users that follow the rules of the software providing partner. Any suspicious activity that is potentially not within the intended use foreseen by the software providing company may result in a change how the software is provided or in a change of the terms of use.

However software is provided for a defined user group in a defined way for a defined intension and hence enables those users to access the software.

Disclaimer and copyrights are published in the appropriate form, as provided software mainly exist in form of background knowledge and hence has no disclaimer.

2.2.6 Training

Training is an important type of deliverable that consists of three phases:

First, the preparation phase defines the curricula, produces the relevant material such as presentation slides, sample models, scenario description and demonstration like videos in appropriate quality, specifies the profile of the trainer and the students and clarifies the training environment such as meeting facilities, type of hand outs, necessary media and arrangements, as well as logistics of the training such as agenda, arrival, participation list, trainer cv, evaluation feedback and training certification.

All aforementioned items are presented in any of the aforementioned types of deliverable and hence follow the review process for deliverables.

Second, the training execution phase consists of the training, which is mainly performed by presentations, oral presentation, software demonstrations as well as hands-on sessions of the participants. This phase uses mainly presentations and oral speech techniques and hence is quality assured and documented using those types of resource.

Third, the training feedback and post-work consists of evaluation feedback collection from participants, the lessons learned from the trainers and the appropriate documentation.

2.3 Copyright

A copyright statement that must be provided by all materials is provided in the project templates. There are two ways of copyright statement in the project: (a) either the copyright belongs to only one partner of the consortium or (b) the copyright belongs to more or all partners of the consortium. In case a partner uses the restricted copyright statement reference the legal entity holding the copyright (e.g. Copyright © 2013 Partner X). Please be advised that the project Consortium does not constitute a legal entity and so cannot assert copyright, although individual members can, of course, assert copyright.

In case more than one partner belongs to the copyright, the statement lists all partners of the consortium like

“Copyright © 2014

Partner X and other members of the Consortium, <http://www.itsm4sme.eu>.”

In the restricted form, no partner can use the material without the permission of the partner expressed in the copyright; in case of the second statement, all consortium partners may use the material.

2.4 Document Nomenclature

In order to structure file directories and clearly indicate the status of a certain document the following document nomenclature has to be used for all deliverables

ITSM4SME_<NR>_<DOCUMENTTITLE>_<VERSION>_<PARTNERID>_<STATUS>

This means:

<NR>:	Is a unique result identifier (e.g. 01) from D.4.2. of the Application Form
<DOCUMENTTITLE>:	Is the title of the document
<VERSION>:	Is the version number, starting from 0.1 and incremented by each merge
<PARTNERID>:	Short name of the Partner affiliation that is responsible for that result
<STATUS>:	Status of the document (START, WORKING, DRAFT, REVIEW, FINAL)

Example: ITSM4SME_06_Quality_Assurance_Plan_v1.2_BOC_WORKING.docx

2.4.1 Changes Management

In case major parts are compiled from different partners, the different parts are either clearly separated by chapter headings or they are marked in colour and tags as depicted:

Changes made by BOC are highlighted, beginning with <BOC> ending with </BOC>

Changes made by HHN are highlighted, beginning with < HHN > ending with </ HHN >

Changes made by BLG are highlighted, beginning with < BLG > ending with </ BLG >

Changes made by CATRO are highlighted, beginning with < CATRO > ending with </ CATRO >

Changes made by ALUMNI-UPM are highlighted, beginning with < UPM > ending with </ UPM >

Changes made by ITD are highlighted, beginning with < ITD > ending with </ ITD >

In case existing text is corrected and not portions of text are changed, the change tracking functionality of MS Office is used.

2.4.2 How to Proceed

After all authors provided feedback, the original author merges the document to a new - incremented - version. Hence a document that is sent with version v0.2 to partners, may receive two responses where corresponding partners indicate the version by their acronyms. The leading author increments the versions to indicate that all changes in previous versions are compiled and may change the status.

Example:

ITSM4SME_06_Quality_Assu..._v0.2_BOC_STARTING.doc (Changes from BOC)

ITSM4SME_06_Quality_Assu..._v0.2_HHN_STARTING.doc (Changes from HHN)

ITSM4SME_06_Quality_Assu..._v0.2_UPM_STARTING.doc (Changes from UPM)

=>

ITSM4SME_06_Quality_Assurance..._v0.3_BOC_WORKING.doc (New Document Version)

2.4.3 Document Styles:

- [1] Graphics are stored with a meaningful name in the original and editable version under the sub-directory "helpgraphs".
- [2] Each graphic is generated as a "png".

- [3] Each reference is added as footer and at the last stage of the document converted into references Harvard Style.
- [4] References that are not books, or additional information that are essential to proof the document, must be stored under the sub-directory “helpfiles”. Web-Page copies have at the first line the URL, in case it is a pdf or any other non writeable file, the link is stored under a textfile with the same name as the original and the extension “_Link”.
- [5] Any contribution has to be stored in the naming nomenclature.
- [6] The language is English Great Britain

2.4.4 Deliverable Status:

START: initial setup of document,

WORKING: chapters are not finished either in format or content

DRAFT: chapters are finished in format of content, but not in balance.

REVIEW: document is finished in format, content and in balance, internal checks and quality assurance are required.

FINAL: the version of the document is final, no changes allowed in that version.

3 Quality Assurance Monitor for Training

The starting point of the Quality Monitoring is the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQUAVET – www.eqavet.eu).



Figure 1 Stages of the EQUAVET Quality Cycle [4]

In order to provide continuous training monitoring, there are four steps within the quality assurance procedure that are continuously performed.

- First, the requirements of the training and key performance indicators are defined
- Second, a monitoring cockpit is developed by providing a questionnaire for each training session and the corresponding monitoring cockpit,
- Third, values of KPIs are collected periodically for each training session.
- Fourth, monitoring and corrective actions are performed while compiling the viewpoint of the participants, the trainers and the organisers.

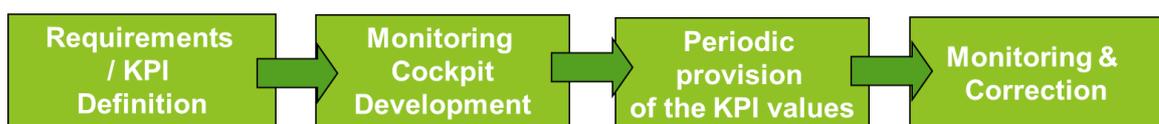


Figure 2 Quality Assurance Monitor Process

3.1 Requirements / KPI Definition

The definition of the training KPIs follows the knowledge scorecard hence reflects four different layers starting from infrastructure and ending at the expected outcome:

- [1] Training outcome assessing the fulfilment of expectations and usefulness of the training.
- [2] Training process assessing the organisation and training preparation
- [3] Training profiles identifying the profile of the trainers and the participants.
- [4] Training infrastructure reflecting food, infrastructure or venue

In order to complete the training monitoring, statistical information is harvested.

3.1.1 KPI Monitoring: Training Outcome

Following KPIs are defined to assess the outcome of the training from the viewpoint of participants:

- Overall assessment of the training.
- Fulfilment of participants' expectations.
- Quality and clarity of the presented content.
- Added value for activities of the trainees
- Practical applicability of the training content.
- Informative and usefulness of distributed training material.
- Social event and possibility for networking with trainers and other participants.

3.1.2 KPI Monitoring: Training Processes

KPIs are specified to assess the process and organisation of the training from the viewpoint of the participants as well as from the trainer.

Participants:

- Organisation of invitation and awareness of the training.
- Clarity of announcement and meaningful description of the training, the target audience and necessary skills.
- Meaningful and detailed explanation how to arrive to the training venue.
- Appropriate administration assistance.
- Quality and effectiveness of agenda and moderation.
- Appropriateness of used media.
- Organisation of the event and additional remarks on the training venue, the project or related aspects.

Trainer:

- Quality of the preparation time for the trainer.
- Clarity of expected training goals.
- Clarity and appropriateness of curriculum and teaching methods.
- Appropriate administration assistance.
- Quality and effectiveness of agenda and moderation.
- Clarity and quality of the provided or needed media.
- Organisation of the event.

3.1.3 KPI Monitoring: Training Profile

Trainer and participants profile is monitored by both viewpoints.

Participants:

- Quality of the presentations.
- Appropriate mix between theory and hands-on.
- Flexibility and capability to react on participants' questions or challenges.
- Competence and presentation skills.

Trainer:

- Skill level of participants.

- Active participation of participants.
- Practical relevance of participants' interaction.

3.1.4 KPI Monitoring: Training Infrastructure

Infrastructure KPIs are reflected from both viewpoints.

Participants:

- Easy accessibility of the training venue and seminar room.
- Equipment and appropriateness of the seminar room.
- Availability of necessary technology for the training.
- Quality of food, beverage and restrooms.

Trainer – Addendum:

- Possibility for preparation.
- Technical equipment and usability of the equipment like but not limited to: flip charts and markers, connection cables, power socket and extensions, tables, microphones and or speakers, whiteboards and magnets, possibility to hang up posters, pin board incl. pins, projector with appropriate screen resolution incl. remote control

3.2 Interesting statistical information

Statistical information needs to be acquired:

- Interest to stay in contact with the project (yes, no).
- The relevant communication channel to hear about the training (colleagues, newsletter, invitation email, website, press/magazine, other internet resource, others).
- Age of the participant (under 20, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60 and above).
- Position in the company of the participant (CEO/owner, department lead, department staff, IT manager/CIO, IT staff, others).
- Industrial sector of the company (construction / craft, energy / water / waste, trading, IT-provider, public administration, associations & interest groups, mining, research, intermediaries, creative economy, training provider, transport & logistic, service, health & social services, information & telecommunication, agriculture and forestry, manufacturing, other)
- Size of the company (less than 10, 10 to 49, 50 to 249, 250 and more)

3.3 Monitoring, Periodic Provision of Values and Corrections

A questionnaire is developed for each training session in order to appropriately address aforementioned KPIs. This results in a questionnaire that is easy to be filled in with a maximum of two A4 pages. Open questions are added for each category to enable participant's comments and collect new issues.

The feedback is collected and a consolidated view of trainers and organisers is produced out of the feedback. It will be reflected by the consortium to introduce appropriate changes in the trainings

and make the quality assurance monitor a living document that continuously monitors the training and enables the consortium to flexibly react on the feedback.

4 Quality Assurance Monitor for Project

The quality assurance monitor for the project is constructed in a similar way like the aforementioned quality assurance monitor for the training sessions. Hence, there is a similar process in KPI definition, questionnaire and monitor development, continuous feedback retrieval and periodic consolidation.

4.1 Requirements / KPI Definition

The definition of the project KPIs follows the knowledge scorecard hence reflects four different layers starting from infrastructure and ending at the expected outcome:

- [1] Project outcome to assess achieved exploitation and impact.
- [2] Project process to reflect project management and project organisation.
- [3] Project profiles to observe project communication.
- [4] Project infrastructure to monitor tools, resources and budget.

4.2 KPI Monitoring: Project Outcome

KPIs to monitor the project outcome are:

- Overall assessment of the project outcome in the last period (PO1) .
- Assessment of expected exploitable results and achieved expected impact (PO2) .
- Assessment of expected results in form of deliverables (PO3) .

4.3 KPI Monitoring: Project Process

KPIs to monitor the project process are:

- Scientific and technical project management. (PP1) .
- Administrative coordination and reporting support. (PP2) .
- Project planning and management and possible corrections. (PP3) .
- Appropriateness of deliverable review process. (PP4) .

4.4 KPI Monitoring: Project Profile

KPIs to monitor the project profile are:

- Quality of the communication between partners. (PR1) .
- Arrangement and time interval of meetings. (PR2) .
- Assessment of common understanding and goal clarity. (PR3) .
- Clarity on each partner's expectations with respect to provided competence and expected deliverables. (PR4) .

4.5 KPI Monitoring: Project Infrastructure

KPIs to monitor the project infrastructure are:

- Assessment of clarity of the contractual basis (PI1) .

- Assessment of provided management tools, file sharing systems, web-sites, templates and other supporting tools (PI2).
- Assessment of resource consumption in comparison with resource planning (PI3) .
- Assessment of budget consumption in comparison with budget planning (PI4) .

4.6 Monitoring, Periodic Provision of Values and Corrections

For each periodic partner meeting the aforementioned KPIs are appropriately addressed. This may result in a questionnaire or in a reflection discussion between the partners, whatever is more appropriate. Goal is to provide a common understanding about the status of the project.

Feedback is collected and monitored in a consolidated view between all partners, which will be reflected by the consortium to trigger adequate corrective actions if necessary.

Conclusions from this self-assessment are communicated in appropriate form like periodic report or review to the project reviewers.

5 Conclusion and Outlook

This document provides basic guidelines to respectfully treating every project result as a valuable deliverable that must undergo a review process to achieve a certain level of quality and hence ensure a homogeneous presentation of EU-funded results to users outside the consortium.

Knowledge scorecards are established as an assessment tool for both the training sessions as well as for the project management to monitor the project status.

- The guidelines are published by the project management and continuously monitoring will be part of the activity of WP2 by the project management.
- The generation of the questionnaire for each training session and the monitoring of the feedback is developed within WP2 and provided to the training organisers.
- The generation of the questionnaires for the project is performed by the project management and WP2 in appropriate form. The monitoring of the feedback is developed and provided by WP2.

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