



**Innovative eLearning Tool for Quality Training  
Material in VET**

Progress Report

Public Part

## Project information

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## Executive Summary

iQTool project – Innovative eLearning Tool for Quality Training Material in VET – is primarily for vocational education and training institutions and to organisations that are directly or indirectly linked to VET. The aim of the project is to develop an open source software tool integrated in LMS(s), which is suitable to assess the teaching quality management of eLearning training programmes and training materials for supporting the application of the quality measurement tool for institutions dealing with vocational training and which therefore can promote the establishment and development of quality culture.

The project will benefit students taking part in vocational training who will receive higher quality education, whose needs will be better served and who will be able to better succeed in the labour market using the knowledge gained through the acquired up-to-date and high-quality e-learning contents and programs. The results created throughout the project – the evaluation software and the related teaching package – can be directly used within the primary target group of the project. The e-learning developers, the managements, teachers and developers of the vocational training institutes are expected to take advantage of the directly available tool widely. With the help of this the quality of the applied e-learning instruction materials and thus the quality of the whole education will improve.

The project is realized by a very professional consortium whose members know each other for long. The coordinator organization, SZAMALK Ltd. has gained experience and achievements in the quality assurance of education, eLearning, vocational training as well as EU project coordination. MTA SZTAKI participates in the project with its eLearning department. This department has achieved several results in eLearning development and participated in several international projects. The Technical University of Crete is responsible for the research work, as they have good practice from previous Leonardo projects. They have gained experience in eLearning software development, thus they take active part in the activities of the eLearning working group as well. The German Research Institute for Vocational Training is coordinating the development of the eLearning instruction material in this project. CENFIM is an institution dealing with industrial vocational training, so its main task in iQTool project is to test the project results (eLearning software and instruction material) in practice. Finally, the Norwegian partner, TISIP is responsible for the quality assurance of the project.

Certainly, the project objectives need longer time than the period of the project to become widespread and really accepted by the target group. The members of the consortium are dedicated to keep project results available long after the closure of the project itself. Anyone interested in the methods, products can contact any partner through the project website, or the contact information given on the project leaflet. The project website with all results and materials related to iQTool can be found at [www.iqtool.eu](http://www.iqtool.eu).

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# 1. Project Objectives

The aim of the project is to develop an open source software tool integrated in LMS(s), which is suitable to assess the teaching quality management of eLearning training programmes and training materials for supporting the application of the quality measurement tool for institutions dealing with vocational training and which therefore can promote the establishment and development of quality culture. The project implementation integrates testing of software and pilot training of the training material as well. Thus the aim of the project is to elaborate an eLearning quality tool which can be applied at European level and which enables the teaching of quality management. Also, the project aims to provide the management and quality assurance of vocational training with effective tool.

The innovative aim of the project is to develop a software tool for the evaluation of the training materials in LMS on the basis of research work result and quality assurance methodology will be formed in this project. The advantage of the integration of the evaluation system and LMS is that it can store the answers related to the quality simultaneously when the training material pages are displayed on the screen. Furthermore, it offers for developers and teachers an opportunity to display statistically the results in the LMS(s) which helps to evaluate them.

The innovative content means the development of an up-to-date and interactive eLearning tool which helps that quality assurance of eLearning training material development in VET institutions can be carried out.

In this context it is of major importance that European VET institutions can enter the competitive education market through a quality approach and guarantee that their eLearning services are conform to an explicit quality standard. For academic and administrative staff it will be important to rely upon the quality of the ODL services proposed by other institutions to validities courses followed by their own students.

On the short run VET institutions can improve the quality of their trainings due to the project results. This way the effectiveness of instruction also improves as the quality of the eLearning contents is also becoming better. The software to be developed will be suitable to meet the combined needs of eLearning developers, service providers and users in the field of modern quality management.

The long term beneficiaries of the project are first and foremost those VET institutions where the equipment is suitable for developing higher quality tools and to establish quality centered approach. Thus there will be a possibility to develop innovative eLearning contents and programmes which meet the highest quality expectations. The project will also benefit students taking part in VET. They will receive higher quality education, their needs will be better served and will be more successful in the labour market using the knowledge gained through the acquired high-quality eLearning contents and programmes.

## 2. Project Approach

The aim of the project is to develop eLearning training programmes and teaching materials together with multimedia and interactive tools which are suitable for teaching quality management in institutions dealing with vocational training and which therefore can promote the establishment and development of quality culture. Though there have been experiments and developments in order to work out training materials in connection with quality management these have not been harmonized or standardized. Thus the aim of the project is to work out an eLearning training tool which can be applied at European level and which enables the teaching of quality management. Also, the project aims to provide the management and quality assurance of vocational training with an effective tool. A further goal is to develop a software which enables the evaluation of eLearning contents on the basis of quality aspects. To achieve that goal it is necessary to work out and establish the criteria system and indicators of quality.

The background of the project is the development and research work done by the partners individually or in the framework of other EU projects. The surveys realized in previous projects pointed out the aims worded in this application and their real needs. These aims and needs meet the priorities of the life-long learning program of the EU, which within the Leonardo program aims to develop innovative e-learning contents and promotes the development of e-learning tools for the quality management of vocational training. In the case of countries participating in this iQTool project the preliminary needs assessment has been done and the necessity to realize the aims set out in the application has been worded. As there seems to be a need for the above in each partner country the chosen common language is English. However, all the project materials will be made available in the national languages of the partner countries.

In the framework of the project we have carried out the evaluation of open source e-learning platforms and determined on the basis of a particular criteria system which platform is most suitable for teaching vocational training quality management. The research report contains the establishment of the evaluation criteria system and the determination of indicators.

The elements of the survey were compiling the research plan and establishing the evaluation criteria system. The research took the form of primary and secondary research. It included on the one hand, exploiting the available information sources (internet, project reports, etc.), and on the other hand, directly evaluating the available materials.

The other aim of the survey was to evaluate the quality management contents applicable in vocational training and based on that evaluation, to prepare an appropriate training programme and e-learning instruction material, which is suitable to train the specified target groups in the field of vocational training in connection with the usage of the software to be developed. In the course of the research, the exploration of the toolkit suitable for training quality management was carried out, through the synopsis of which the main characteristics of the contents specialised for the field of vocational training can be identified.

We found that very few respondents consider their procedures “excellent”. The category “excellent” varies between 5% and 25% to every question. Most respondents rate their procedures “good” (between 40% and 50% to each question). Receiving between 12% and 25% to almost every question, “understandable” is the second most answer. Some procedures are considered “poor” (5% to 25%) and some are not even implemented yet (1% to 17%). These findings indicate that there may be a demand in educational institutions for a quality assurance tool as developed in the project iQTool – Innovative eLearning Tool for Quality Training Material in VET.

### **3. Project Outcomes & Results**

At the end of the first year of the project we can present three project results that are available for public usage: a research report, study about the results of the surveys concerning the open source platforms, and quality management in VET, the project leaflet and website.

Until now only the first phase of the project is closed, that is the research work needed to identify the quality indicators that will be necessary for the appropriate application of the software. The research report is result of work package 2. Its main objective is to evaluate the open source elearning platforms and the quality management contents applicable in vocational training. This evaluation is the basis of the training programme and instruction material to be developed in WP 4. With the help of this research we discovered the factors that mostly influence the spread of quality assurance in the field of elearning and vocational training. During the research the project members review the toolkit of quality management by surveying EU projects and by a questionnaire survey of the target group.

As we got a lot of data for the report, we considered it would be better to divide the material into x smaller parts, that is to say all chapters became individual reports. This way we and the public as well can handle the information easier.

In the frame of our dissemination activity, the project leaflet and the website are ready. The project leaflet is bilingual, it is available in English + one of the partners national languages (Hungarian, Norwegian, Greek, German and Portugal). This publication is really informative. Readers can get acquainted with the main goals of the project, the target groups, the European added value and the partner organisations. It is a great advantage of the leaflet that it is bilingual, because more people can understand it and get familiar with our objectives. The leaflet is available at all partner organisations, at conferences organised by the partners or where they are invited to.

The third result of this first half of the project's lifecycle is the website. It is really attractive, and contains lot more information than the leaflet. It is available at <http://www.iqtool.eu>. The website is made up of two parts one public site for the target group and an intraweb site that is available for the project partners and contains all working documents. On the public site, people find all relevant information about the progress of the project, data, events, contact information are all available. You can search for documents and can register.

## **4. Partnerships**

The project objectives are realized by six partner organizations from five countries. Each member of the consortium has excellent experience in European Union funded international projects, in eLearning and VET programmes, development. The project coordinator has already cooperated with each partner in other projects, so it was easy to invite partners through personal contacts and knowing their preparedness and suitability.

The coordinator organization, SZAMALK Ltd. has gained experience and achievements in the quality assurance of education, eLearning, vocational training as well as EU project coordination. MTA SZTAKI, the other Hungarian partner participates in the project with its eLearning department. This department has achieved several results in eLearning development and participated in several international projects. The Technical University of Crete is responsible for the research-survey work package, as they have good practice from previous Leonardo projects. They have gained experience in eLearning software development, thus they take active part in the activities of the eLearning working group as well. The German Research Institute for Vocational Training is coordinating the development of the eLearning instruction material in this project. CENFIM from Portugal is an institution dealing with industrial vocational training, so its main task in iQTool project is to test the project results (eLearning software and instruction material) in practice. Finally, the Norwegian partner, TISIP is responsible for the quality assurance of the project.

## **5. Plans for the Future**

The long-term beneficiaries of the project are first and foremost the vocational training institutions where the equipment is suitable for developing higher quality tools and to establish quality centred approach. There will be a possibility to develop innovative e-learning contents and programmes which meet the highest quality expectations. The project will also benefit students taking part in vocational training who will receive higher quality education, whose needs will be better served and who will be able to better succeed in the labour market using the knowledge gained through the acquired up-to-date and high-quality e-learning contents and programs.

The results created throughout the project – the evaluation software and the related teaching package – can be directly used within the primary target group of the project. The e-learning developers, the managements, teachers and developers of the vocational training institutes are expected to take advantage of the directly available tool widely. With the help of this the quality of the applied e-learning instruction materials and thus the quality of the whole education will improve. This is certainly a longer-term process by the end of which through the dissemination of the project results the tool will be widely used. That is partly the task of the participants directly involved in the projects (dissemination, exploitation). The professional associations and governmental organisations whose responsibility is to improve the quality of vocational training and so the dissemination of results will also contribute. The long-term effect of that will be felt later when the knowledge level and professional preparedness of students leaving vocational schools will also be higher as they have gained their knowledge with the help of high quality e-learning instruction materials. The better prepared professionals serve increasing competitiveness.

The members of the consortium are dedicated to keep project results available long after the closure of the project itself. Anyone interested in the methods, products can contact any partner through the project website, or the contact information given on the project leaflet.

## **6. Contribution to EU policies**

The European level realisation and application is an essential objective for the consortium. Vocational training and its quality assurance cannot be treated only as a national issue. It is one of the basic aims of the EU to increase as much as possible the education level of employees in each member state. This is the only way to compete with the competitors of Europe in the globalised world. The quality centred attitude and the continuous development of quality in all areas is essential for vocational training as well. It is outstandingly important to develop institutional quality culture and to raise it to the same level in all member states.

The consortium partners of the project all have extensive experience in European Union vocational training and development programs, electronic education and quality assurance. The partners have formed the consortium with the aim of developing a tool together that is suitable for evaluating e-learning instruction materials in vocational training depending on e-learning platforms based on a specified criteria system. Though the quality assurance instruction package that goes with the tool will be translated into the languages of the partner institutions and thus will enable usage on its own; the project outcomes will be worked out so that they could be used at the European level without difficulties and that the outcomes could contribute to the quality improvement of vocational training and e-learning at an international level.

As the completed project outcomes will be freely available on the home page of the project, their availability will be open to any European vocational training institution, developer or user. In the dissemination and exploitation phases of the project our aim is to spread the results in as wide a circle as possible at the European level. The European added value therefore will be the innovative and novel tool that will be developed in the project, which tool could serve vocational training and e-learning quality at the European level.

The successful realization of this project improves the quality of education in vocational educational institutions. We hope that indirectly our project will make it easier for VET institutions to ensure courses in the concept of lifelong learning. Secondly, if the quality improves, it makes it simpler to compare the different VET institutions and their services. Also the iQTool project can facilitate VET organizations to join the ECVET system. These improvements will influence the students as well. If they have the possibility for quality training, it gives them advantage on the labour market.