

# ***“Common Quality Assurance Framework- VET, a provider online model”*** **CQAF-online**

## Dissemination Strategy GUIDE

**Partner:**



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Lifelong Learning Programme

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document has been written for the project *“Common Quality Assurance Framework-VET, a provider online model”* funded by the action *Transfer of Innovation* within the framework of the *Lifelong Learning LdV Programme*.

It presents the dissemination strategy for the 2\_year CQAF-online project including national dissemination plans for each project partner. All dissemination activities are either offered by partners or suggested by Dimitra I.T.D.

The dissemination strategy does not focus only on the individual activities of each partner but gives also some general information and suggestions to achieve the best possible results. Certain issues and quality criteria should be taken into account by the implementation of dissemination actions. This paper also tries to give useful recommendations on this score.

A project and its results can only be successful when they are of sustainable value. For this reason it is necessary to provide a dissemination strategy. The actual use of project outcomes is dependent upon successful dissemination activities. Therefore, it is important to understand that a good dissemination strategy is the basis for successful exploitation of results. Both issues are closely related and dependent upon each other, hence this paper also contains some general information on exploitation.

## **2. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF EU PROJECT RESULTS**

Whenever we speak of dissemination and exploitation of project results we refer to activities that are designed to ensure that these results are appropriately recognised, demonstrated and implemented on a wide scale. Within the field of dissemination and exploitation the term valorisation is also used to combine the two issues.

It is of crucial importance for achieving best possible results that all persons involved have the same understanding of these terms.

### **Dissemination**

Promotion and awareness raising is an important part of the dissemination process. These activities take place at the beginning of the project, or even before it starts, in order to inform about the existence of a project, the aims and objectives and its planned developments.

Dissemination in general is a planned process of providing information to the target group and key actors in regard to project process, activities and results by the use of different dissemination channels at the local, regional, national, EU and international levels.

### **Exploitation**

Exploitation includes the two activities; mainstreaming and multiplication. Mainstreaming means the actual transfer of successful results to appropriate stakeholders and decision-makers. Multiplication concerns the process of convincing end users to adopt or apply the results of the projects.

In summary dissemination and exploitation aim to achieve the following objectives:

- To promote and raise awareness with regard to the project contents and developments
- To provide information on the quality, relevance and effectiveness of the results
- To successfully transfer the results to appropriate decision makers in order to achieve their sustainable promotion and support
- To convince individual end users to adopt and/or apply the results, also after the project and support by the project partnership has ended

## **2.1. Dissemination**

The dissemination concept is built in two dimensions.

### **1) Horizontal dimension**

The horizontal dimension contains all activities to strengthen the communication and dissemination between the participants. This includes all internal activities to provide information and instruments for further individual dissemination of each partner.

### **2) Vertical dimension**

The vertical dimension concentrates on all activities designed to actually reach the target groups/ stakeholders. This includes all activities that will be carried out individually by each partner such as the involvement of their own partners, networks and stakeholders and the implementation of the individual national dissemination plan.

Both the horizontal as well as the vertical dimension will be carried out by using different approaches, methods and instruments of dissemination, always dependent upon the most adequate means and possibilities of each project partner.

Basically, they can be structured as follows:

#### **Face-to-face activities**

Presentations, round tables, workshops, seminars, conference ...

#### **Media-based activities**

##### Internet-based

forums, websites, networks ...

##### Paper-based

Leaflets, posters, articles, activity reports ...

#### **Performance activities**

Activities in the project process when dissemination actions happen automatically such as the test of the prior elaborated CQAF-VET provider model, involvement in evaluation activities ...

The most important questions that should be answered by each dissemination strategy are:

- 1) Why disseminate
- 2) What to disseminate
- 3) Who to disseminate to

- 4) Who will do it
- 5) When will it be done
- 6) How will it be done
- 7) How it will be evaluated

## **2.2. Exploitation**

Even if exploitation takes place after the project's lifetime, when all project results exist as final products, it is necessary to plan exploitation activities from the start. The basis for successful exploitation is a well planned and implemented dissemination strategy at different levels. Furthermore, the identification of stakeholders has to be carried out as early as possible. It is important to involve target groups/stakeholders in the project process. On the one hand they can be more easily convinced of the project outcomes when they have the chance to follow the development, but on the other hand also project consortia can benefit by including suggestions or recommendations from the stakeholder side in the development process.

Two key aspects to successful exploitation of project results:

- Producing relevant results of good quality to satisfy the demands of providers, policy makers and ultimately society more generally
- Ensuring that results reach the right target audiences in a format and at a time, that provides greatest benefit.

### **3. BACKGROUND OBJECTIVE AND AIMS OF THE CQAF-ONLINE PROJECT**

In 2006, the Helsinki Communiqué underlined the need to further develop and implement common European tools specifically aimed at VET, with regards to Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF) in VET. The framework contributes to quality improvement in VET and to increased transparency of VET policy developments between Member States, thereby promoting mutual trust, mobility of workers and learners.(OJ C 311, 21.12.2007, p. 13.)

Based on the above CQAF, this partnership, through an LdV -TOI developed a European-model based on CQAF for VET-providers. Starting point of the development was the ISO-model of Folksuniversitetet Sweden and the attention areas for (Adult)VET. The model focused on the common nominators for quality assurance at VET-providers level with regards to national peculiarities. The elaborated CQAF-model by this partnership consists of three major axes regarding outcome of learning processes. The first axe relates to essential themes regarding the content and learning methodologies (see attached model). The second axe concern vital organizational themes that are essential for the delivery of (A)VET and the third one covers important themes that address issues of the learner. To each axes there are 4 themes attached, totally twelve themes. They have been defined and indicators have been distinguished that steer quality development of the whole VET- program on that specific theme. These enable organizations to give proof that they have taken good care of that specific theme. The model can be used as a monitor and assurance instrument for assessment of Quality at EU level as well as for the development of the organizations` own quality system. The model incorporates 28 indicators to monitor and assess quality measures to be taken at a basic level (1) as well as at a more sophisticated level (level 4).

The national Agencies for VET in partner countries have shown interest in the model and some part of it has already been tested by the Swedish YH-myndigheten. However, the 12 themes and 28 indicators of above elaborated model, need to be tested at wider level by VET-providers and then it has to be developed to a user-friendly online instrument for VET providers. That is why there is a need that coordinating partner and YH-myndigheten will test the model at a wide range in order to finalise the model before it is developed to an online-instrument. The partners will test the changes in the model in their own countries to make sure that they are applicable

#### **Aims and objectives**

The overall aim of CQAF-online project is to test and finalise already elaborated QA-model by this partnership and transfer the model to an online instrument for self-assessment and quality improvement for VET-providers.

The project pursues the following main objectives:

- The Model should be more clear and easy understandable of indicators and levels.

The model should be tested at a wider range by such an authority as YH-myndigheten in order to pinpoint the language of the text for different levels. Afterward all the new changes will be tested in partner countries in order to verify the final version.

- The Model should be a tool for quality improvement

The model will be developed to an on-line self assessment tool, providing support for quality improvement through best practises and reference point (VET-providers, specialists and QA-consultants)

**3.1. Target groups**

The target group is represented by VET providers, national Agencies for VET, EU-agencies, decision makers in politics, economy and education in the regions. Short term beneficiaries will be VET providers, enterprises and individuals receiving vocational services.

Long term beneficiaries will be national Agencies for VET, EU-agencies, other political decision makers on national and EU level.

**3.2. Project Results**

To find the best time for dissemination it is very important to know the project outcomes and the time when their development is completed. All partners are expected to disseminate these results through their individual dissemination channels.

The results of CQAF-online project in chronological order are as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Result</b>
02/2012	Testing methodology and analyzing tool document
09/2012	Final version of CQAF-VET provider model
06/2013	Online version of CQAF-VET provider model

## **4. DISSEMINATION IN THE CQAF-ONLINE PROJECT**

The dissemination strategy of the CQAF-online project follows the general guidelines of dissemination as explained above as well as the facts provided in the project proposal.

The dissemination of CQAF-online consists of individual national dissemination plans that can be enlarged and adjusted by each partner at any time. The other part is the activities already predetermined in the work packages of the project. The results of CQAF-online are very well defined and embedded in a realistic timetable; hence it is easy for all partners to implement their dissemination activities.

### 1) Why disseminate?

- To tell end users (VET providers) about the project
- To contribute to policy development (regional, national and European)
- To inform and advocate to sponsors and funding bodies
- To support and enhance the image of their own organisation
- To increase the impact of the project by extending it to multipliers
- To tell commercial organisations that you have a product to sell

### 2) What to disseminate?

- The project mission or message
- The deliverables
- The project process
- The methodologies
- The European partnership

### 3) Who to disseminate to?

- End users
- Organisations that can help to reach others
- Organisations that can enhance the impact of the project in other ways

### 4) Who will do it?

All partners are responsible for their national dissemination activities including the involvement of stakeholders. The partner organisations have at their disposal good networks and contacts at regional level and experience in the field of European cooperation in order to carry out dissemination activities also beyond the borders.

5) When will it be done? (see 4.3)

The project proposal presents an initial time schedule with regard to the completion of project results and dissemination instruments. A timetable for all activities is provided in paragraph 4.3.

6) How will it be done? (see also 4.1.)

The project proposal already gives specific instruments to be used for dissemination activities such as leaflet, poster, cd-rom, participant in conferences and seminars. A very important tool will be the project website that will provide all relevant information about the project including a download area. Each partner also presented individual instruments in the national dissemination.

7) How will it be evaluated? (see also 5.)

A very useful way of evaluating the dissemination activities is the documentation of all activities by each partner. This documentation can be in form of lists of participants, presentations, agendas, meeting minutes, pictures, copies of documents such as emails, articles or newsletters. The documentation should be based on the use of quantitative and qualitative indicators.

#### **4.1. Instruments of dissemination in the CQAF-online project**

Some specific instruments are already defined in the project proposal. The instruments are available and all partners are expected to use them. Additionally the individual national dissemination plans for the partners include further instruments that will be used to disseminate the project outcomes. (see Annex)

The instruments of dissemination with their date of completion are as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Instrument</b>
9/2012	Project website
10/2012	CD-rom
6/2012	Leaflets and Poster
6/2012 – 7/2013	Participation in relevant regional/national workshops and seminars
11/2012 – 9/2013	Placement of information in relevant web-sites and periodic

## **Overview of dissemination instruments and additional material**

### **1) Project website – .....eu**

Web site of the project (Available in all partner languages) will contain all the necessary information and documentation regarding the CQAF-VET online model. The web-site will be promoted by interlinkage with other relevant VET sites both nationally and at European level.

### **2) Dissemination material**

- **Leaflets and Posters**

Leaflets and Posters will be produced to be available at seminars and conferences in order to attract attention to the project.

- **Press releases**

All partners will present different press coverage especially at local and regional level to inform stakeholders about the project activities and prepare sustainable use of the outcomes.

- **Cd-rom**

CD-rom with material from web-site will produced to distribute to stakeholders

- **Mailing Lists – Email Lists**

Having identified our target audiences, drawing together a mailing list of key people to receive materials and information about our project can be a useful start. Some questions to consider are:

- how many copies of brochures, publicity leaflets, materials etc. will we send to the contacts on your mailing list?
- how can we encourage your contacts to disseminate copies of materials more widely within their own institution/organization?
- are there any organizations that would be willing to distribute information on your behalf?

### **3) Participation in relevant regional/national workshops and seminars**

Each partner will:

- organise 2 workshops for VET-providers, business associations and relevant decision-makers at regional level,

- participate in at least 2 VET conferences and seminars at regional and national levels in order to spread information about the project and CQAF VET Online Model .

#### **4) Placement of information in relevant web-sites and periodic**

Each partner will:

- publish at least 2 articles in specialised VET magazines at regional and national levels,
- place information about the CQAF VET Online Model and project results in relevant national VET websites with interlinkage to the project web-site.

#### **Visibility actions (poster, leaflet etc):**

“With the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union”



#### **Publications (reports, website, ...):**

“This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] and all its contents reflect the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.”

The disclaimer for publications is officially translated in the EU languages and should be used in this form. Also the LLP logo is available in all EU languages and should not be changed individually.

Further information can be found on following websites:

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about/eacea\\_logos\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about/eacea_logos_en.php)

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/publ/graphics/identity\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/graphics/identity_en.html)

#### **4.2 Who might help us disseminate?**

We need to have in mind that we do not need to undertake all CQAF-online project dissemination on our own. Identifying existing channels through which to work can be one of the most effective methods of dissemination. Inevitably, our target audiences will already have events, journals, professional bodies and associations that they engage with. Our project will stand a greater chance of success if we can work through these existing channels as opposed to creating further publications and events that result in overloading already overworked people.

It is worth finding out what other projects working in the same subject area or around the same topics are doing and then approaching them with a view to collaborating - this will probably improve the impact of your dissemination as well as reduce overall costs.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Who Does What</b>
Linking to Bodies	Each partner will need to establish links with bodies that could be interested in being actively involved in CQAF-online project or disseminated the project's aims, progress and results.
Linking CQAF-online project with relevant National projects	Each partner in its own country must research to see if there are any other projects running with similar target groups and who are willing to help us disseminate CQAF-online aims, findings, progress etc
Linking CQAF-online project with relevant transnational projects	Dimitra will research projects that have been or currently are implemented and make a contact. These already established partnerships can assist us in disseminating our project's aims and results in other countries beyond the partners' own countries.

### 4.3. Summary of dissemination activities of all partners in the CQAF-online project

Dissemination Activity	Purpose	Target Groups	Method/ Vehicle	Timing	Responsibility of
Mailing Lists – Email Lists	Locate and Contact Key audiences	Trainers, VET Providers, Associations, Public Authorities that are responsible for VET	Mailing Lists – Email Lists,	From the outset of the project	All Patnrns
Development of a Web Site that will provide information to the visitors.	Make CQAF-online project known to the general public, Get people and organizations understand and eventually get involved and provide support to the project	General Public, VET Providers, Associations, Public Authorities that are responsible for VET	Web Site	At the outset of CQAF-online project and continuous updating with latest information	Development by EDITC, Translation of Contents All Partners,
Dissemination of a Poster & Leaflet to key audiences	To attract CQAF-online attention to the project.	VET-providers, VET authorities, business associations and relevant decision-makers.	Poster & Leaflet	Will be decided	Implementati on by DIMITRA, Dissemination by All
Press releases	Make CQAF-online project	General Public, VET	Press	From the outset of the	ALL

<b>Dissemination Activity</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Method/ Vehicle</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Responsibility of</b>
	known to the general public, Get people and organizations understand and eventually get involved and provide support to the project	Providers, Associations, Public Authorities that are responsible for VET	releases	project	
One-to-One Briefings and short presentations to colleagues and co-workers	It is crucial that the people we work with know and understand what our project is trying to achieve. It is always best to start from people within our organization and people that work in the same field as we do and then inform people that can provide support and foster CQAF-online project results	Staff member and Co-workers of partners.	Email Lists, One-to-One	From the outset of the project	ALL
Cd – Rom	CD-rom with material from web-site will produced in order to distribute to	VET Providers, Associations, Public Authorities that are	Cd – Rom	Will be decided	Implementati on by DIMITRA,

<b>Dissemination Activity</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Target Groups</b>	<b>Method/ Vehicle</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Responsibility of</b>
	Conference in Thessaloniki	responsible for VET			Dissemination by All
Workshops	Two workshops for VET-providers, business associations and relevant decision-makers will be organized in all partner countries. At least 10 people from the target group should attend each workshops	VET-providers, business associations and relevant decision-makers	Workshops	Will be decided	All
Participate in at least 2 VET conferences and seminars	To spread information about the project and CQAF VET Online Model	VET-providers, business associations and relevant decision-makers	Conference - seminar	From the outset of the project	All
Placement of information in relevant web-sites and periodic.	To spread information about the project and CQAF VET Online Model	VET-providers, business associations and relevant decision-makers	Information in relevant web-sites and periodic.	From the outset of the project	All

## 5. EVALUATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

To guarantee good quality and achieve the best possible results it is suggested to use different tools to measure the impact of the activities carried out. There are two main types of quality indicators, quantitative and qualitative data.

### **5.1. Quantitative data:**

- number of enquiries about a product
- number of orders for a product
- number of brochures, DVDs etc. distributed
- number of visitors to a website
- number of visitors attending a conference, seminar, workshop
- amount of press coverage (number of articles and items on radio or TV)
- size of audience reached through dissemination activities

In CQAF-online project some quantitative data was already mentioned in the project proposal that has to be seen as **minimum to fulfil**. For example the participation in at least 2 VET conferences and seminars

The national dissemination plans already include information about quantitative data. It should be an objective of the partnership to try to enlarge the activities implemented, meaning that it is possible to change the dissemination plans for each partner at any time.

### **5.2. Qualitative data:**

These indicators are more specific and not so easy to implement. They could be in the form of short surveys as part of brochures or publicity hand-outs. They can be distributed to participants at a conference, seminar or workshop. The partner that is responsible for evaluation and quality assurance it might be useful to include a few questions in regard to dissemination material and/or activities in general surveys of project/process/product evaluation.

Qualitative indicators are useful:

- to obtain detailed, subjective feedback
- to give a general feeling of responses
- to offer specific ideas about what has been successful, how to do things differently next time or new ideas for future projects

### **5.3. Documentation**

It is considered as very important to document all dissemination activities. On the one hand the documentation serves to keep an overview about dissemination activities in general and on the other hand it provides quantitative and maybe also qualitative data to measure impact and ensure quality. Each partner is expected to document its own activities carried out in the field of dissemination. The form of documentation can vary depending on the dissemination activity, e.g. pictures, presentations, hand\_outs, list of participants, agendas, meeting minutes, notes, copies of emails, newsletters, press articles ...

During the project's lifetime regular updates with regard to the partners' dissemination activities are recommended. This update basically concerns adjustments within the national dissemination plans. Before the final report is written DIMITRA I.T.D. will provide a form to each partner to summarise all dissemination activities carried out. This feedback will include the actual state of the art of dissemination achievements of CQAF-online and should not show any significant variations from the national plans.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Document</b>
06/2013	Update of national dissemination plans by each partner
09/2013	Report on dissemination activities (Final Report)

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Project results can only be of sustainable value and use if the dissemination of them is well planned and implemented at different levels. The strategy aims to support all activities in the fields of dissemination by presenting general aspects as well as specific information to be used by each project partner according to the national dissemination plans. Furthermore, the strategy tries to highlight specific indicators for achieving high impact as well as for how high quality can be assured in the implementation of dissemination process.

In general, dissemination can only be successful through close cooperation between all partners. Not only the communication but also the individual use of national dissemination channels, contacts and networks has great influence on the impact of a project.