



## Sustainable development of Blue economies through higher education and innovation in Western Balkan Countries – BLUEWBC

Project no. 609693-EPP-1-2019-1-NO-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

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<b>Type of document:</b>	Quality Assurance (QA) plan
<b>Workpackage:</b>	WP6 – Quality Plan
<b>Deliverable:</b>	Dev. 6.1 – Quarterly status report
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<b>Participating partners:</b>	P2-P7
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<b>Date:</b>	30. August 2020
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## Summary

The quality management plan was first published internally at NTNU. The quality plan for BLUEWEB work activities is first adopted in 28. August 2020. This document is adopted by the Quality Assurance (QA) Board 30. September 2020.

This document presents the Quality Plan for Erasmus + BLUEWBC project. It is developed in the scope of the WP6(Quality Plan) of the Project in compliance with the project description and all applicable rules & guidelines. Quality control is an integral part of the project and aims to ensure that objectives are met in the most effective way.

This Quality Plan (QP) defines the general approach to quality control, internal and external evaluation and the procedures to be followed by the partners for effective communication as well as production and documentation of the Project deliverables. The document outlines the strategy for how the quality control mechanisms will be applied so that the operational, management and working procedures are comprehensively monitored and improved throughout the project duration. The QP contains a set of scheduled activities and defines the objectives, roles and responsibilities. The QP includes established indicators, methodology and procedures for evaluation of project activities and results. For each task it determines the responsible partner(s), timeframe and tools of implementation, the expected results or products, as well as the respective quality criteria. The QP is planned to work activities of each work package, deliverables and related outcomes. Through regular monitoring and review of work activities, deliverables and related outcomes, this QP could ensure the high quality of project outcomes and could guarantee the compliance of project results with project objectives.



## Purpose and Structure

The goals of the project work activities and the outcomes are set out in the 'Application Document', in the project team annual plans, and in the work package and deliverable descriptions. The quality plan will contribute to the realization of the goals of the work activities, deliverables and the other related outcomes of the project.

The quality plan covers all work activities in the project. The purpose of the system is to ensure that there are regular reviews of the quality and of measures of improvement in work activities, deliverables and other comes as a whole. The purpose of the system is to promote the sharing of experiences and best practices.

There are three main components to the quality plan:

- Shared system description – A framework that places responsibilities and stipulates the minimum requirements for evaluation of quality of work activities, deliverables and other related outcomes (this document).
- Description of quality control produces – The QA board will draw up procedures for each evaluation in accordance with the system description. The procedures must state:
  - How the evaluations are carried out?
  - Who is responsible for their being carried out?
  - How the results are processed (formal forums)?
  - Who is responsible for follow-up?

This document and its procedures follows the applications deliverables and deadlines. The QA Board may set additional deadlines if necessary, e.g. evaluations and of drafts. The procedures must be available on the project website.

- Sharing experiences – Every level must provide input to joint, local measures (each work package) that facilitate the sharing of experiences and learning on the individual and organizational level.



## QA Responsibilities and participation

The QA board consists of one member from each of the partners P1-P7, see application chapter 6.1.

Lead partner is P1, NTNU

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The work to assure the quality of project work is part of the ordinary leadership and management structure, and will normally be based on existing procedures, arrangements and bodies.

The QA Board role is to approve or recommend corrective actions to the Management Board based on its work and findings.

The descriptions of the work packages contain the information about the distribution of tasks and responsibility for carrying out and following up the evaluations in the quality plan.

### Project Management Board

The QA Board has final responsibility for reviewing quality of the work activities, deliverables and other related outcomes and make appropriate recommendations to the Project Management Board. QA Board lead the quality assurance work at their level. The PMB is responsible for taking action and overseeing the quality assurance of the work packages.

The Project Management Board consists of one member from each of the eligible partners, see application chapter 8.1. At the kick-off meeting in Aalesund, P7 was elected representative of industry organisations. P1 – NTNU is lead partner.



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P8	CEM		
P9	GMD		
P10	IEC		

## Work package and work package leaders

The work package owners (the lead institutions) are responsible for:

- quality assurance and continued development of each deliverable and related outcome in accordance with the requirements in the quality assurance system.
- assessment of the need for improvements, and implementation and follow-up of relevant measures.
- project partners receiving access to the evaluation results.

## Persons with work package responsibility

The work packages responsible for each deliverable and related outcome(s) will appoint a person with responsibility for each deliverable and related outcome(s). The work package leaders and the person with deliverable and related outcome(s) responsibility must ensure:

- quality assurance and continued development of each deliverable and related outcome(s) in accordance with the requirements in the quality assurance system.



- assessment of the need for improvements, and implementation and follow-up of relevant measures.
- project partners receiving access to the evaluation results.

## External audits

As described in the application, three independent audits will be carried out during the project: At M18 Mid term (WP 6.3), M30 Evaluation of seminars and pilot courses per each partner HEIs (WP 6.4) and end of project – Final evaluation & audit M36 (WP 6.5)

The external auditor will be appointed from approved audit vendor such as DNV-GL or similar.

## Peer reviews

For BLUEWBC, competent faculty members from partner HEIs will participate in reviews and evaluations of key deliverables.

Before carrying out investments EU coordinator will be consulted as to the eligibility of the investment.

## Project partners for work packages

Project partners, both the partner in charge of a work package and participating partners have an obligation to follow the quality guidelines and to make sure all necessary effort is put in to achieve the desired quality of a work package.

## Monitoring of work activities

The Project Management Board conducts 6 monthly meetings where planned activities for the coming half year, progress and activities due to be started are reviewed. During these meetings it is important that all activities have been conducted according to this quality procedure.

Work package leaders are responsible for starting up work on deliverables as stated in the schedule, Management Plan.

If the WP leader or any partner actively involved in the WP assesses that it is not able to complete the task in time it must notify the PMB immediately with a proposal for corrective action. If no corrective action is proposed by the partner the PMB shall decide further action and inform partners involved.



To monitor the progress of tasks and deliverables the QM board shall generate a progress reports every **9** months with input from all WP leaders who include WP partner participants progress. If significant deviations from plan is detected, the PMB board is notified immediately.

The monitoring can take the form of e-mail reporting or online meetings resulting in **Quarterly Status** reports. The results must be documented.

The work package leaders reporting takes place four times a year and must examine goal achievement and the allocation of resources, in order to provide the management with a better foundation on which to make decisions regarding priorities. The work package leaders' reports and other relevant reports to the QA Board are prepared, drawing on the remarks by relevant analyses and surveys.

The results of each work package evaluations are directly part of the **Quarterly Status** reporting and are part of the knowledge base that the EACEA and underlying units learn about the status of the project.

### Review of work activities

Each work package has a detailed description in line with the approved application. Each work package has a description pursuant to the EACEA evaluation.

The work activities, deliverables and related outcomes are reviewed regularly in accordance with the description of project application to assure the content of the work package is comprehensive, based on evaluation results and other input.

The QA Board provides a list of reviewers who are responsible for reviewing relevant deliverables and related outcomes within a reasonable timeframe (Attached with this document). Normally, the review process should be completed within **four** weeks. The purpose of the review is to assess the quality of the deliverables and the need to make changes to the deliverables or decline a deliverable. If the report is about academic work, the review can also be carried out for specializations within an extra peer-review process. The extra peer-review is involved in that four-week timeframe. Otherwise, general administration review process takes place. If the report is about investment, an external audit applies.

For each deliverable and related outcome, a review team must be formed. A review chair is responsible to coordinate the review process. **The review team must provide a written document**





**to address issues and problems to the authors of the deliverables (Guide for review report is attached with this document).** The written document must give the work package leaders a timeframe of resubmission the deliverables. Such timeframe(s) must report to the management team of the project. Reviewers must inform the QA Board if extra actions should take place, for example the quality of the deliverable is poor. The review team can predict the work package needs substantial work in order to provide a sound deliverable. In this case, the QA Board can decline the deliverable. The QA board must document and report this issue properly to EACEA.

The QA Board provides guidelines for reporting purpose (Attached with this document). Using these templates is mandatory in order to keep the consistency of the deliverables and other related outcomes, including Quarterly Status reports, Guides for academic report, Guides for evaluation report, Guides for audit report, Guides for teaching, training and learning material, Guides for reporting purchase, and Guides for review report.

List of reviewers, submission deadlines and notification of review is also attached with this document.

A general tamplet for reporting is attached with this document.

### Deliverables and revisions

The QA Board formerly requests all work package leaders to submit deliverables at least three weeks before the due dates, although those dates were written in the application document. The purpose is to save enough time for review.

Once the review is completed, a review document is given to the work package leaders. The review document is open to all project partners. Work package leaders must address the review comments and revise the deliverable in a reasonable timeframe, i.e., within 3-4 weeks.

The work package leaders should expect another round of reviewing. Thus, WP leaders must control the quality of the deliverables before submission.

### Periodic project evaluation

During the project lifetime the QA board shall submit a quarterly quality report as described in WP 6.1 containing the progress of WPs and the status of deliveries and events.



Evaluation of revised curricula, WP 6.2 is due in June 2022. The start-up of this work should be timely and should be part of progress reports.

Mid term evaluation and audit is due in August 2021. This audit also includes an external audit report. WP6.3

Evaluation of seminars and pilot courses is due in August 2022, WP 6.4

Final evaluation and audit is due in February 2023, WP 6.5

Project evaluations consist of self-evaluations and external evaluations:

1) Self-evaluations are carried out by the WP leaders, and must include input from WP partners. Self-evaluations should contain a review of work progress, quality control of work activities, meeting minutes, events and other forms of activities. A plan of action is also required if delay happens. All these evaluations should be documented.

2) The peer reviews will be performed by a competent faculty member and will be based on the project management's self-evaluation and other relevant material. The WP leader will appoint a reviewer for major deliverables:

- Reports to be published
- Educational curriculums
- Dissemination material



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Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



## Appendix 1 – Guidelines and templates

1 - Quarterly report BLUEWBC

2 - List of reviewers, deadline of submission and review due dates.docx

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