



IncEdu

Developing Inclusive Education for Students with

Disabilities in Sri Lankan Universities

QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN



Contents

1. Overview.....	3
1.1. General consideration	3
1.2. Purpose of the Quality Assurance Plan	3
1.3. Aims and Objectives	4
1.4. Timeline	5
2. Quality Assurance Framework	6
2.1. Roles and Responsibilities	6
2.2. Quality Assurance Methodology	8
2.3. Evaluation methods.....	9
3. Evaluation activities.....	9
3.1. Internal evaluation	9
3.2. External evaluation.....	13
4. Indicators.....	14
4.1. Quantitative indicators.....	14
4.1.1. Related to project-management	15
4.2. Qualitative indicators	15
4.2.1. Related to project-management	15
4.2.2. Related to project-outcomes.....	16
5. Quality Control	16
5.1. Project Risks and Mitigation Actions.....	17
5.2. Quality Improvement	19
6. Quality management tools.....	19
Annexes.	20
Annex 1. Quality Board.....	21
Annex 2 Quality Assurance Measurement and Assessment Instruments	21



1. Overview

1.1. General consideration

The purpose of the Quality Assurance (QA) Plan is to provide a single point of reference on the quality that will be governed during the course of the *Developing Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities in Sri Lankan Universities* (IncEdu) project. QA Plan defines the project organization, roles, and responsibilities with emphasis on the quality control and quality assurance activities that will be carried out. The current plan describes how the project will execute its activities from a quality perspective and ensures that standards and procedures are defined, and their execution is continuously monitored and improved.

The QA Plan has to be read by each project team member. Adherence to the processes and procedures set out in this plan are required for all activities carried out within the project.

Quality assurance and management is more than an externally imposed obligation. It should be regarded as an inseparable part of project management; a part that ensures the high quality of project's processes and results. It consists in quality procedures providing guidance for all partners on how to perform their activities according with the professional expectations of the consortium and Erasmus+ standards. Therefore, all projects funded by the European Commission are obliged to follow the quality assurance process.

1.2. Purpose of the Quality Assurance Plan

The general objective of this plan is to develop assessment tools in all areas of the project (preparation, development, dissemination, and management) to evaluate processes, outputs and outcomes. QA plan will be used to monitor the status of activities, level of implementation and achievement of project's objectives.

The European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (EQARF) provides



a European-wide system to help Member States and stakeholders to document, develop, monitor, evaluate and improve the effectiveness of their quality assurance and management practices.

Quality assurance process should satisfy the following four basic requirements:

- ✓ Usefulness, e.g. clearly defined goals for evaluation of the results;
- ✓ Feasibility, e.g. accurate planning of methods, time, costs;
- ✓ Fairness, e.g. respect to the “objects” of evaluation;
- ✓ Accuracy, e.g. production of valid results regarding the evaluation questions, aims and targets.

The European Commission has set it as a requirement that all funded projects should plan quality management processes. According to a suggestion in the Survival Kit for European Project Management, evaluation processes should:

- ✓ Simplify the consultation process within the project partnership;
- ✓ Predict the development of the project and prepare the project team for pressure points in the course of the project life span;
- ✓ Assist the project coordinator in quantifying results and relating these to the project objectives.

1.3. Aims and Objectives

The general aim of IncEdu project is to develop a system of support for equalizing opportunities for students with disabilities (SWDs) in Sri Lankan Universities. This is to ensure the rights of SWDs to access higher education, to combat discrimination by instilling awareness and to establish a sustainable support network for SWDs in Sri Lankan Universities.

The specific aim of this project is the inclusion of SWDs in the higher educational institutes of Sri Lanka by accommodating and adapting suitable environments for them.



The specific objectives identified in achieving the aim mainly consist of creating awareness, developing competency of staff in the partner universities of Sri Lanka, establishing a conducive learning environment for SWDs, providing provisions in the curriculum to accommodate requirements of SWDs and making policy recommendations.

The Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) shall be used to define the quality methodology, the applied methods as well as the various responsibilities for achieving the required high-quality levels during the project, in correspondence with the specific objectives given below.

- ✓ To create community awareness.
- ✓ To develop competency of staff of the partner universities in Sri Lanka.
- ✓ To establish conducive learning environment for students with disabilities.
- ✓ To make policy recommendations.

Thus, the purpose of the evaluation within the IncEdu project will be:

- ✓ To determine whether project objectives, priorities and needs of the target groups (Teaching staff, Trainees, Administrative staff, Technical staff) are met, generally looking at the same time for unexpected results of project activities;
- ✓ To assure that project management and assurance processes are appropriately followed, and intellectual outputs and events meet their stated requirements.

Specifically, the evaluation processes shall address:

- ✓ the project internal processes;
- ✓ the project intellectual outputs;
- ✓ “sustainability” of the project outputs.

1.4. Timeline

The Quality Assurance Plan runs throughout the whole project implementation and encompasses the work under all project activities. It aims to monitor and guarantee



the execution of project activities and outcomes with the necessary quality, within the timeframe and budget.

The hereby Quality Assurance Plan covers 1st – 36th month of the IncEdu project.

2. Quality Assurance Framework

2.1. Roles and Responsibilities

A Quality Board (QB) with representatives from all participating universities was set at the beginning of the project. The focus of the QB will be to ensure that the project processes and outcomes are in accordance with relevant QA procedures and Erasmus+ requirements. All quality assurance procedures will be thoroughly planned and documented in the Quality Assurance Plan. Transilvania University of Brasov, together with QB members and based on the input from all teams will prepare a set of procedures for quality assurance and include them in the Quality Assurance Plan. The Project Manager will ensure that the project processes and deliverables are in accordance with relevant QA procedures and Erasmus+ requirements.

The Quality Assurance process of IncEdu will be coordinated by Transilvania Transilvania University of Brasov (UniTBv). The Quality Board (QB, see Annex 1) joins representatives from all partners and acts as the structure responsible with QA during the project implementation. QB will cooperate closely with the project coordinator - University of Peradeniya (UOP), as well as all other project partners and stakeholders.

The Quality Assurance procedures will apply to all activities and it will imply a joint responsibility of all partners. The main goals of Quality Assurance management will be to:

- ✓ assess and provide feedback on processes during the project implementation;
- ✓ produce high quality deliverables in time and form;
- ✓ identify deviations from objectives, as well as risks;
- ✓ define and apply corrective measures as soon as possible.



Tasks and responsibilities of Quality Board:

- ✓ assessing activities to set quality standards and identify risks and vulnerabilities;
- ✓ developing meeting surveys and measurement instruments, analyzing the data, and sharing a summary of the findings (including and recommendations);
- ✓ development of Quality Assurance Plan;
- ✓ monitoring Quality Assurance Plan implementation by regular meetings (on site and virtual communication at least once every three months and whenever necessary) and implementing corrective and improvement actions;
- ✓ elaboration of annual QA reports;
- ✓ providing advices to the project coordinator and project management team regarding preventive actions in case of identified potential risks;
- ✓ providing advices to the project coordinator and project management team regarding corrective actions to be undertaken in case of mismatches between “expectations” (planned activities) and “reality”.

Tasks and responsibilities of University of Peradeniya:

- ✓ close cooperation with Transilvania University of Brasov and provision of relevant information and feedback;
- ✓ assign and carry out necessary changes to improve processes;
- ✓ assign and carry out preventive and/or corrective actions if recommended by Quality Board.

Tasks and responsibilities of all partners:

- ✓ cooperation with Quality Board and provision of feedback and the requested information completely and in time;
- ✓ translation of QA documents whenever necessary;
- ✓ carry out necessary changes to improve processes;



- ✓ carry out preventive and/or corrective actions if recommended by Quality Board.

2.2. Quality Assurance Methodology

The Quality Assurance (QA) methodology is based on the 4 major project quality management processes corresponding to the four phases of the Deming cycle as defined within the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET).



Quality Planning (Plan) — the act of defining the main quality criteria and thus, setting the quality standards to be followed and determining how to satisfy them. At this stage, the Quality Assurance Plan (QA Plan) is elaborated, describing the overall evaluation methodological framework.

- 1) *Quality Assurance (Do)* — evaluating overall project performance on a regular basis to provide confidence that the project will satisfy the relevant quality standards. This stage refers to implementation of the QA Plan, namely elaboration and distribution of evaluation forms and questionnaires within the partnerships; conduction of interview with partners for the needs of the internal evaluation process;
- 2) *Quality Control (Check)*— monitoring specific project results to determine if they comply with relevant quality standards and identifying ways to eliminate cases of unsatisfactory performance. This stage includes carrying out analysis of the results, generated from the previous stage and documenting them in internal evaluation reports.
- 3) *Quality Improvement* – this stage refers to implementation of recommendations, preventive and corrective actions assigned at the previous stage.



2.3. Evaluation methods

During the project lifetime both internal and external evaluation methods will be used to assure the quality of the project results and activities.

Internal evaluation methods

These methods will be used inside the project partnership to provide feedback regarding project implementation, workflow design, partners' satisfaction, and partnership communication, as well as identification of areas for improvement and design recommendations for better performance. They will include (not exclusively listed):

- 1) online questionnaires;
- 2) discussions during project meetings;
- 3) interviews with partners' representatives;
- 4) discussions during online and face-to-face meetings; etc.

External evaluation methods

These methods will be used to measure the satisfaction and gather feedback from the project target groups and different project stakeholders outside the consortium. They will include (not exclusively listed):

- 1) questionnaires among end-users and tutors;
- 2) interviews with representatives of the project target groups, trainers, other stakeholders;
- 3) other methods considered appropriate by the partners.

3. Evaluation activities

3.1. Internal evaluation

The internal evaluation will focus on project processes and activities, project



outputs and dissemination activities performed. The project quality assurance activities will have a two-fold purpose: (i) to ensure that work is completed with a minimum amount of errors; (ii) to identify any remaining errors as early as possible. Thus, the quality assurance process will facilitate the efficient work of partners towards successful implementation, achievement of project aims and final approval by the European commission.

The *internal evaluation* processes applied during the IncEdu project implementation are:

- 1) evaluation & monitoring of progress and processes;
- 2) assuring that all intermediate results meet the declared objectives of the proposal and are relevant for the defined target groups.

The internal evaluation will be carried out on several levels. The following plan gives an overview on the different evaluation levels, the time scheduling, aims and methods as well as expected outputs of internal evaluation. All partners are committed to provide information and inputs as requested.

Evaluation/monitoring of progress and processes

The evaluation process is to be carried out continuously, with several stages: after each project meeting; mid-term and at final stage. Quality Board will gather partners' data and will summarize the results into annually QA reports.

□ Project meetings¹

When	Evaluation aims and methods	Expected outputs
First meeting M2, Y1 Sri Lanka	Kick-Off-Meeting Methods: Evaluation by online questionnaire; Group discussions.	Meeting Internal evaluation report
Second meeting	Training Programme MU	Meeting Internal

¹ Due to Covid-19 pandemic outbreak the timeline is likely to be adapted and changed



M10, Y1 Czech Republic	Methods: Evaluation by online questionnaire; Group discussions.	evaluation report
Third meeting M12, Y1 Romania	Project meeting end of 1 st year and Workshop Methods: Evaluation by online questionnaire; Group discussions.	Meeting Internal evaluation report
Fourth meeting M6, Y2 Croatia	Education and educators' workshops (ZU) Distribution of evaluation forms among meeting participants. Methods: Evaluation by online questionnaire; Group discussions.	Meeting Internal evaluation report
Fifth meeting M9, Y2 Sri Lanka	Workshops for teaching and non-teaching staff Distribution of evaluation forms among meeting participants. Methods: Evaluation by online questionnaire; Group discussions.	Meeting Internal evaluation report
Sixth meeting M11, Y2 Sweden	Project meeting 2 nd year and Knowledge Sharing Workshop (UU) Distribution of evaluation forms among meeting participants. Methods: Evaluation by online questionnaire; Group discussions.	Meeting Internal evaluation report
Seventh meeting M3, Y3 Sri Lanka	Workshop by educators and supervision of UNIZG (EUSL) Distribution of evaluation forms among meeting participants. Methods: Evaluation by online questionnaire; Group discussions.	Meeting Internal evaluation report
Eighth meeting M9, Y3 Sri Lanka	Training program for the staff of the support centre at UOP Distribution of evaluation forms among meeting participants. Methods: Evaluation by online questionnaire; Group discussions.	Meeting Internal evaluation report
Ninth meeting M12, Y3 Sweden	Final conference and final project meeting Distribution of evaluation forms	Meeting Internal evaluation report



	among meeting participants. Methods: Evaluation by online questionnaire; Group discussions.	
--	--	--

☐ **Communication and collaboration**

When	Evaluation aims and methods	Expected outputs
Ongoing activity	Aims: Feedback about cooperation of the partner universities. The internal cooperation shall be evaluated and feedback to the consortium will be provided. Methods: Discussion during partners' meetings. Interviews with the partners (if needed). Online questionnaires.	The results will be included in the QA reports

☐ **Deadlines**

When	Evaluation aims and methods	Expected outputs
Ongoing	Aims: Feedback to project coordinator & partners. Methods: Discussion during partners; Actual dates of outputs delivery & tasks completion.	The results will be included in the QA reports

☐ **Project management and implementation methodology**

When	Evaluation aims and methods	Expected outputs
Ongoing activity	Aims: All partners to share their concerns (if any) regarding the project management process; implementation methodology and specific future tasks. Method: Discussion during partners' meetings; Interviews with partners; Post-meeting online questionnaires.	Additional recommendations in QA reports

☐ **Work packages implementation**



When	Evaluation aims and methods	Expected outputs
1) Upon development of draft version of a deliverable/ result/ outcome 2) Upon finalizing an outcome	Aims: To ensure that the developed deliverable/results/outcomes meet the qualitative and quantitative indicators set by the consortium. Method: Internal evaluation forms with focus on the outputs. Discussions during partner meetings. Interviews with partners (if needed).	QA reports.

Quality Board will provide the following internal evaluation reports:

- ✓ First internal evaluation report will cover M1 –M12 for Year 1 and will be provided in M1Y2 to UOP to be presented with the interim progress & financial report.
- ✓ Second internal evaluation report will cover M1 –M12 for Year 2 and will be provided M1Y3 to UOP to be presented with the interim progress & financial report.
- ✓ Third internal evaluation report will cover M1 –M12 for Year 3 and will be provided in one month after the project's end to UOP to be presented with the final progress & financial report.

For each main process specific QA procedures will be developed and approved by Quality Board.

3.2. External evaluation

The objects of the external evaluation will be to collect feedback from external stakeholders during dissemination and outbreak activities.

When	Evaluation aims and methods	Expected outputs
During dissemination and outbreak activities	Aims: To collect feedback on the project impact at local, regional, and national level in Sri Lanka Method: Feedback questionnaires, discussions	Summarized feedback from stakeholders; List of improvements to the final intellectual outputs.



4. Indicators

The indicators that will be applied during the quality assurance process will be divided in two main groups:

- ✓ quantitative (regarding the actual results of the project realization);
- ✓ qualitative (regarding the quality of the delivered outcomes and of the process).

Quality assurance monitors project deliverables to verify that the deliverables are of acceptable quality and are complete and correct).

The qualitative indicators will be applied on all stages of the project implementation to guarantee the successful project execution as well as efficient and useful project outcomes.

4.1. Quantitative indicators

4.1.1. Related to project-management & dissemination

- 5 project meetings
- 5 technical and financial reports
- 1 final technical and financial report
- 1 Quality Board with representatives from all partners
- 1 Quality Assurance Plan
- 1 Quality Assurance workshop
- 3 annual Quality Assurance Reports
- 1 project website
- 1 twitter account
- 1 LinkedIn account
- 3 outreach days
- 1 ebook summarizing the project outcomes and outputs.



4.1.2. Related to project outcomes

- 1 report on analysis of needs and requirements of SWDs, key issues and problems in providing opportunities for SWDs in HE equal terms, required improvements in physical, technological, and human capacity;
- 1 training programme for the staff of the Sri Lankan centres;
- 1 list of technologies and services recommended for providing special support at Sri Lankan universities;
- 1 research design based on focus-groups conducted with Sri Lanka teaching and administrative staff to identify attitudes, knowledge of students with disabilities, perceived difficulties, needs, possible solutions
- 10 staff members from Sri Lankan partners participating to education/training and workshops held by Zagreb University;
- 26 staff members (teaching and non-teaching) participating in 5 education workshops held in Sri Lanka;
- 10 educators supervised and guided to conduct workshops;
- 1 four-day workshop to showcase examples of successful awareness raising programmes;
- 4 awareness events tested and piloted by Sri Lankan universities;
- 1 workshop held in Sri Lanka to assess the pilot awareness events.

4.2. Qualitative indicators

4.2.1. Related to project-management

- ✓ high quality of the outputs - stated in reports;
- ✓ high quality of the project management documents - quality assurance plans, dissemination & exploitation strategies;



- ✓ annual progress quality report by all partners without major problems or quality issues;
- ✓ conducted discussions on project and quality management issues during each partnership meeting with identified resolutions;
- ✓ positive feedback of the interim & final report;
- ✓ project is executed within budget and within the 3 year period.

4.2.2. Related to project-outcomes

- ✓ developed outputs with high quality;
- ✓ scope of changes (if they are very considerable changes or just minor ones);
- ✓ above 85% satisfaction & positive evaluation of IncEdu stakeholders;
- ✓ above 85% positive feedback about project (discussions throughout the project & promotional events in the end);
- ✓ above 85% positive feedback about developed IncEdu outputs (awareness raising programmes, dissemination workshops and outreach activities);
- ✓ above 75% positive evaluation of project quality evaluation report;
- ✓ above 80% positive evaluation reports of all partners on project organizational & financial management;
- ✓ significant interest in IncEdu outputs from other universities from different regions of the country.

5. Quality Control

The Quality Board will check the quality of the management process, the implementation methodology and the outcomes based on the feedback received from partners, participants, and stakeholders. In case of failing to reach the indicators, corrective measures will be identified and taken to avoid any risk to the quality of the



project and its products.

5.1. Project Risks and Mitigation Actions

The following risks of unsatisfactory performance are most common:

✓ *Covid-19 pandemic outbreak*

Starting March 2020, in the light of Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, activities in all partner countries have been significantly affected and adapted to quarantine, mobility and travel restrictions, home working etc. As all nations are facing structural and profound changes (in education, economy, communities and interpersonal interactions) the project timeline and activities will be adapted, step by step, to the new social reality with the focus on quality and meeting all the outputs and results. All partners have to be flexible and adaptive in order to manage unpredictability, a major challenge when referring to project implementation.

✓ *Timeframes and deadlines are not kept*

The partnership involves different partners with rich experience in the implementation of EU funded projects. This background will help for the constant monitoring of the agreed timeline of activities and will facilitate taking preventive measures to avoid delays. Internal evaluation reports will outline when deadlines are not met, and the project management will be requested to take appropriate measures.

✓ *Commitment of partners to the project is not equal*

Partnership agreements will ensure that all consortium members are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the project. Task lists signed at the end of each project meeting shall declare that all partners carry on the tasks allotted for the next project phase in due time and responsibility. In order to ensure commitment, the project coordinator UOP will focus on strengthening of working bonds and communication channels between the partners. Smooth and frequent communication will be a



prerequisite for a common sense of commitment to project goals.

✓ *Problems occurring in the methodology for implementation*

Any possible methodological issues (such as selection of relevant materials, approach to the target group, preparing and designing research questions for focus groups, conduct focus group, creation of contents, implementation plan and procedures and evaluation tools, etc.) will be a subject of discussion at project meetings. Various options for project development will be reviewed throughout the duration of the project. Any possible problems emerging in this area will be discussed and solved in the framework of the foreseen evaluation and quality assurance session at the project meetings.

✓ *Results do not correspond with initial plans*

The project work plan and this QA Plan foresee several moments of evaluation of the achieved results in comparison with the stated objectives:

- (i) periodically during/after partnership meetings,
- (ii) in the interim evaluation reports;
- (iii) additional evaluative tools and methods (as appropriate).

This mechanism will allow the project partners to refine the outputs in case they do not comply with project requirements. The evaluation of the developed materials will provide the necessary feedback from the target group and will be analyzed to improve the project results.

✓ *Problems related to the valorization (dissemination and exploitation) phase*

To prevent the emergence of such problems, dissemination and exploitation activities will be a key discussion issue in all IncEdu partnership meetings. The project manager will be in charge of constantly monitoring the dissemination and exploitation activities and guaranteeing the achievement of the stated dissemination and exploitation objectives.



5.2. Quality Improvement

After carrying out the quality checks, the feedback results will be evaluated, making efforts to improve the project performance. Quality improvement is an ongoing process. Partners will strive to continually improve performance, revisit the effectiveness of project teamwork and regularly solicit partners' feedback.

6. Quality management tools

The evaluation tools shall be used by the partners to collect feedback on the developed outputs. They will include (a non-exhaustive list is provided here):

- ✓ Feedback Questionnaires for internal evaluation of the process of project implementation – to be provided by Quality Board after each project meeting to be filled by each participant. The questionnaire will be online.
- ✓ Project evaluation questionnaire – such questionnaires will be used to collect feedback from the participants on the project management process on annual base. The questionnaires will be used to collect the partners' viewpoint on the project implementation and the results will be summaries in the Annual Quality Assurance Reports.
- ✓ Participants' evaluation forms for outputs - to be used for gathering feedback from the participants.



Annexes.

Annex 1. Quality Board

Annex 2 Quality Assurance Measurement and Assessment Instruments



Annex 1. Quality Board

Members of the Quality Board - IncEdu -

<i>Partner University</i>	<i>Quality Board member</i>
<i>University of Peradeniya</i>	Samanmala Dorabawila
<i>University of Ruhuna</i>	Renuka Priyantha
<i>Eastern University of Sri Lanka</i>	G Vigneshwaran
<i>Sri Lanka Technological Campus</i>	Sharmini Perera
<i>Transilvania University of Brasov</i>	Carmen Buzea
<i>Masaryk University</i>	Boris Janča
<i>Zagreb University</i>	Mertina Feric
<i>Uppsala University</i>	Fanny Johnson