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Assessment Comments Briefing Sheet

In this briefing sheet, detail is provided on the **expectations of Erasmus+ National Agencies** for comments prepared by experts undertaking final report assessments for KA220 Cooperation Partnerships. Examples of comments are also provided at the end of the briefing sheet.

Introduction

Final reports for KA220 Cooperation Partnerships are required to be assessed by at least two experts, one of which must be external to the National Agency (NA). This initial phase of internal/external assessment is referred to as the *individual assessment* phase. Whether undertaken by an internal or external assessor, there is a minimum quality requirement for comments and a secondary review should always take place. It is the ultimate responsibility of the NA to ensure that assessment comments and scores meet minimum quality standards and can be used to provide the necessary information and feedback to beneficiaries.

As Cooperation Partnerships involve more than a single expert, a *consolidation* phase also exists. Consolidation can take place face-to-face or virtually but, in all cases, requires experts to agree on a single set of comments and scores for each assessment. Consolidation should result in a single set of harmonised comments, covering each individual work package as well as summative feedback to the beneficiary and the NA. Consolidation should also result in a single set of scores which must be consistent with the final set of comments rather than being a purely mathematical average of scores awarded to the individual WPs by individual experts.

In all cases, NAs need to ensure that comments are consistent with the Five Cs model, being **Coherent, Comprehensive, Consistent, Courteous and Concise**, as per the descriptions below:

- COHERENT
  easy to understand for beneficiaries;

- COMPREHENSIVE
  covers all sub-criteria for final report assessment, for each work package;

- CONSISTENT
  easy to align with scores awarded during final report assessment and predefined scoring ranges and definitions;

- COURTEOUS
  polite and respectful and with no use of first-person references (e.g., I think that, I expect);

- CONCISE
  respects maximum character count of online assessment tool (e.g. 5000 characters per WP).

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When reviewing a final report assessment, the NA might ask an assessor to revisit or revise their assessment, especially where the Five Cs (above) are not satisfactorily addressed. In no situation, however, should an NA propose changes to the scores attributed by an assessor, asking instead that assessors, themselves, ensure consistency between scores and comments.

Regardless of the score being awarded, experts must assess the final report in full, providing comments for each work package. Additionally, experts must prepare *Overall Comments*, providing a summative analysis of the final report and highlighting key strengths and weaknesses.

It is especially important that comments and scores are consistent, providing POSITIVE feedback (often the basis of a highly-scored assessment that confirms acceptable, good or excellent project delivery, but with positive comments also able to feature in low scoring assessments) and LESS POSITIVE feedback (often the basis of an assessment that is scored below threshold in one or more areas and for which project or output delivery is below expectation, inadequate or weak).

Example Comments: Positive

Below you will find an example of the breadth and type of comments expected where the final report assessment is POSITIVE. Examples are provided for comments in WP1 and WP2.

WP1: PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Management actions were consistent with original planning, relying on a dedicated Steering Committee of high-level partner representatives and named work package leaders playing an active and important role in delivery of the targeted tasks and outputs. Level of engagement of partners and staff in management and coordination activities is clear and convincing.

Partner collaboration is strongly evidenced in work package and overall project delivery, with coordination and communication efforts well-described and pertinent, with relevant tools employed and with excellent levels of engagement at virtual and face-to-face partner meetings.

Early-stage risk analysis informed regular partner discussions on scheduling, progression and achievement, with valid strategies introduced for preventing, managing and mitigating risks. Conflict resolution measures were clearly defined in partner agreements and appropriate.

Erasmus+ online digital platforms, mainly EPALE and the EPRP, were effectively employed as a means of promoting emerging results at key stages in the project lifetime.

Accessibility featured strongly in project planning and delivery and provides a credible basis for inclusive learner engagement and support in the future. Digital tools and platforms played an important role in delivery of the targeted learning resources and should facilitate their continued use. Sustainable development was inherent to the wider development vision and was positively addressed in learning content and efforts to deliver digital resources and engage key stakeholders. Active and democratic participation is evident in co-design and co-creation efforts.

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OTHER WP: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT (EXAMPLE ONLY)

Curriculum development activities were implemented as planned, relying on an experienced coordinator to guide remaining partners in needs mapping, gap analysis and the co-creation and delivery of a responsive and high-quality curriculum to meet identified learning and development needs in the targeted sector. No changes evident or reported.

Efforts to engage educators at key stages in the design of new teaching resources are pertinent and in line with the overall commitment to co-creation, assuring the quality and continued relevance of the targeted deliverables. The breadth and range of activities delivered is consistent with the wider vision for this WP and with overall project objectives.

The focus and value of the new curriculum is convincingly outlined, confirming its importance in intra-project learning content development. A decision to publish the curriculum in six partner languages, going beyond the initial commitment, further underlines the value of the curriculum, with a positive commitment to wider promotion.

Impact on participants is convincingly demonstrated through educator engagement in co-design activities, and in related educator feedback, with the purpose of this engagement clearly stated alongside the benefits of transnational collaboration and exchange.

Innovation is evident in the emerging curriculum, which effectively addresses key development needs for educators, and provides a solid baseline for future programme development. It is clearly argued how this important deliverable positively complements existing programmes and curricula in the participating institutions and countries.

European added-value is especially evident in efforts to engage educators from different European countries in a co-design and development process and with a view to delivering a new curriculum that meets the needs of partner and wider institutions looking to modernise existing curricula.

Quality assurance and evaluation measures were effectively employed in co-creation and development processes, with valid efforts to secure feedback from participants, and in relation to the emerging curriculum, for which external validation was sought from key stakeholders.

Dissemination actions were sufficient in scope, quality and outreach, using existing partner networks to raise awareness of the overall goals of the project and to actively and effectively promote its results, including the newly-developed curriculum.

Impact on the participating organisations is clear in efforts to engage educators in co-design and development actions, and in overall commitments to integrate the emerging curriculum.

Wider impact potential is confirmed, and encouraging, relying on targeted efforts to promote the emerging curriculum to potential users in partner and wider countries, especially to organisations looking to modernise existing programmes and curricula.

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Example Comments: Less Positive

Below you will find an example of the breadth and type of comments expected where the final report assessment is LESS POSITIVE. Examples are provided for comments in WP1 and WP2.

WP1: PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Management actions are not consistent with original planning, and no changes were formally proposed or agreed with the contracting authority. A Steering Committee was formed but only a single meeting was held across the entire project lifetime, which is a significant reduction compared to originally management planning. Work package leaders and teams reportedly met but with no documented evidence or insight into related discussions and decisions. Insufficient insight is given into partner engagement in management and coordination activities.

Partner collaboration is not convincingly evidenced in work package and project delivery, with coordination efforts not sufficiently described, and with a lack of insight into tools and platforms employed as a means of facilitating intra-partner communication. Virtual partner meetings are not clearly documented or described.

Early-stage risk analysis is pertinent but with no additional insights given into continuous risk monitoring, management and/or mitigation. Conflict resolution measures were not specifically considered.

Whilst anticipating the use of EPALE and the EPRP as a means of actively promoting the end project results, no efforts to engage with Erasmus+ online digital platforms are reported.

Accessibility was a strong feature in original project planning but with no clear insight given into targeted actions that were introduced to facilitate access among learners and professionals with specific or additional needs. Digital tools and platforms feature sufficiently in the developed learning resources and should facilitate their continued use. Sustainable development was inherent to the wider development vision and remains the case at the project end. Specific green practices are not clearly described or reported, however. Active and democratic participation positively relies on co-design and co-creation efforts involving key stakeholders but with limited insight given into the type and level of engagement.

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Curriculum development activities were not fully implemented. No changes were proposed or agreed with the contracting authority yet needs mapping, gap analysis and educator involvement extended to just two (out of five) partner countries, which is less than initially envisaged. The rationale for this reduction in outreach and engagement is not clearly addressed or explained.

Efforts to engage educators at key stages in the design of new teaching resources are pertinent but a notable reduction in the scope of engagement diminishes the relevance of the emerging curriculum, especially in countries where needs affirmation and co-creation activities did not take place. The breadth and range of activities delivered is not consistent with the original vision for collaboration and exchange.

The focus of the new curriculum is consistent with original planning but the potential for continued and wider use is diminished by the lack of outreach and engagement in needs analysis and collaborative development. A decision to publish the curriculum in just two (out of five) partner languages is also not consistent with the initial commitment, with no clear justification for this change.

Impact on participants is not convincingly explained with limited insight given into educator engagement and feedback measures, and efforts to gauge attributable change and improvement.

Some innovation is evident in the emerging curriculum, yet this addresses key development needs for educators in just two countries and institutions. How this important deliverable complements existing programmes and curricula, in wider partner countries and institutions, is not convincingly addressed.

European added-value is not consistent with the original project vision with insufficient effort to engage partners from different European countries in a process of collaboration, exchange and co-creation, and with reduced linguistic outreach also limiting the potential for wider take-up and use of the emerging curriculum.

Quality assurance and evaluation measures were not consistent with original project planning, with limited evidence of partner and wider stakeholder engagement in quality assurance and continuous improvement measures.

Dissemination actions were limited in scale and outreach, relying predominantly on social media as a passive means of awareness-raising and with limited direct outreach to key stakeholder networks, in participating and wider countries, as a means of promoting the new curriculum.

Impact on the participating organisations is limited to those partners engaging directly in needs mapping and co-creation activities, with insufficient insight given into wider partner impact.

Wider impact potential is not convincingly defined or explained, with insufficient efforts to identify, inform or engage stakeholders looking to modernise existing programmes and curricula, in participating and wider countries.

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