

CPDLab

Continuing Professional
Development *Lab*

D4.2 Report on Pedagogical Activities

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1. OVERVIEW

CPDLab is a small-scale, two-year project, comprising six Work Packages led by four different organisations. In broad terms, CPDLab is about creating professional development modules for three areas related to the use of digital technology in schools: (a) Interactive Whiteboards: innovative pedagogical use of IWB technology in secondary schools. To fully exploit new teaching and learning opportunities offered by Interactive Whiteboard technologies; (b) eSafety: improved safety policies in secondary schools, addressing cyber bullying, the use of social networks, responsible use of mobile technologies and the Internet, among others; (c) Future Classroom Scenarios: implementation and dissemination of teaching and learning activities for the future classroom.

The CPDLab Description of Work includes the production of two deliverables under WP4, the Quality Assurance Work Package, which summarise the main recommendations from members of the Pedagogical Board (PB), namely regarding the quality of (i) the developed courses and (ii) the validation processes.

This deliverable aims to identify the suggestions and recommendations made by the Pedagogical Board (PB), turn them into action points and make observations (and recommendations, where applicable) on their implementation. It also touches upon the Independent Evaluator's D4.3 Interim Report.

The minutes of the PB meetings are included in the report as Appendices and are thus offered as evidence.

2. THE QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN

2.1 Structure

The Quality Assurance Plan for the CPDLab project is founded upon the work of both the Pedagogical Advisory Board (PAB) and an Independent Evaluator. Their work is complementary, in that the former reviews the documents that are created by the various partners under their respective Work Packages, is briefed on the process that led to their creation and makes comments, suggestions and recommendations that are then taken up and discussed by the consortium, to be eventually integrated in future iterations of the development of the three courses - Interactive Whiteboards, eSafety and Future Classroom Scenarios.

As stated in the deliverable D4.1 Quality Assurance Plan, the role of the PAB is threefold (page 5):

- “To ensure that the three courses being developed in the project are aligned with requirements from a broader range of MoE and regional education authorities and complement any technical training and other forms of CPD being provided by ICT companies;
- To provide feedback on the project validation protocol;
- To comment on and add to the recommendations made by teachers at various stages in the course development and validation process, particularly following the Course Development Focus Group in April, 2012 and the Course Validation Focus Group in April 2013”.

The Pedagogical Advisory Board is constituted by researchers, representatives of government agencies and other stakeholders who, in one way or another, are linked to the challenges posed by the creation of CPD courses in the three areas of the project. Each of these members were invited to take part in the PAB due to their knowledge, expertise and specialism, in particular their experience in projects revolving around the educational use of digital technologies, their involvement in research into the curriculum integration of ICT or in the design and delivery of Continuous Professional Development programmes, or their participation in expert networks.

Further to their specific expertise, the fact that the PAB members have different backgrounds and come from different countries is very relevant to the project. However, it is also true that it is a rather small group and that there are fields of expertise – given the three areas covered by the courses - that are better represented than others. In fact, there is one expert each covering the eSafety and IWB areas. These areas were reinforced for the second phase (validation of finished courses) of the project, through the continued involvement of the expert course development teachers. The cultural and geographical diversity should be maintained, as far as possible.

At the conclusion of the project, the Pedagogical Advisory Board is constituted by:

Name	Affiliation
Jim Ayre	European Schoolnet (EUN) – Senior Advisor, member IWB Working Group, steering member of iTEC.
Maureen Haldane	Manchester Metropolitan University - Senior Learning and Teaching Fellow; Research interest and publications on interactivity and IWBs; iTEC partner.
Karl Hopwood	eSafety Consultant and InSafe expert. Karl resigned from the PAB in September 2012, after the first phase of the project, so that he could work as an expert contributing directly to the CPDLab eSafety course.
Milan Hausner	Principal of the Junior Language School, Prague, advisor for interactive learning.
Lars Ingesman	Senior Consultant, UNI-C Danish Computing Centre for Education and Research. iTEC partner. Lars resigned from the PAB in November 2012, as a result of taking up a new position in a new organisation.
Fernando Campos	inSafe expert, iTEC technical coordinator for DGE, IWB teacher trainer. Fernando joined the PB in December 2012 taking over the place left by Lars.
Torbjørn D. Moe	NCIE, Norwegian Centre for ICT in Education. Torbjørn joined the PB in September 2012, taking over the place left by Karl Hopwood.

Alongside the Pedagogical Advisory Board, having complementary roles to it:

Name	Role in Project
Dorothy Cassells	CPDLab Project Manager

Barry Taylor	Independent Evaluator
José Moura Carvalho	Quality Assurance Lead (from the beginning of the project until August 2012).
Teresa Pombo	Quality Assurance Lead (from September 2012 until the end of the project, in September 2013).
Janice Richardson	InSafe Programme Lead, EUN
Associate partners	IWB working group, iTEC partners

The Independent Evaluator, in turn, has a dual role. While sitting as an observer on the PAB, he monitors and provides an independent view on the course development process, This distance from the object of analysis ensures that there is an additional hermeneutical layer to the whole quality assurance process. He also acts as a 'critical friend', someone who, while acting as an observer, is capable of reflecting upon and communicating the changes that he deems necessary to improve and perfect the whole development process as well as the final outputs.

“The role of the Independent Evaluator is to work within the project’s quality assurance plan, and will focus on the extent feedback from the wider group of stakeholders in the Pedagogical Advisory Board has impacted upon and influenced the course development process. The Independent Evaluator will be looked to act as a “critical friend” to the CPDLab project team, reviewing and providing informal feedback and recommendation to help inform the three courses produced by CPDLab meet the needs of teachers from across Europe.”(D4.1, *ibid*).

The IE selection process was done through a procurement procedure, the terms of which were prepared by the Project Coordinator and discussed with Work Package 4 (Quality Assurance).

2.2 Objectives

For the PAB the object of analysis consisted of reviewing and providing feedback on the key documents being produced under each of the work packages. During the project, these have included: the Survey of existing course materials; the Validation Protocol; the Quality Assurance Plan itself; and the comments and suggestions made by the teachers in both the Course Development Focus Group and Course Validation Focus Group.

The Independent Evaluator (IE) in the project added to this process by providing a meta-analysis of the pedagogical activities, in the sense that he: collated information from the various partners (by reading all the documents produced), participated in face-to-face and online meetings of the PAB; interviewed some of the PAB members. The IE then produced two autonomous, critical reports to be addressed by all project partners and the PAB.

2.3 Modus operandi

It was planned that the Pedagogical Advisory Board would convene four times during the project: March and June 2012; March and June 2013. Two of the meetings were to be online and two face-to-face. This plan was fulfilled as follows:

The PAB convened twice in 2012. For each meeting, the Project Coordinator sent all the documentation to be discussed beforehand, so that members had the opportunity to go over it and then make their suggestions and recommendations.

The PAB also convened twice in 2013. The Project coordinator made available all the necessary documentation beforehand as well as the minutes of previous meetings.

The meeting scheduled for March 2013 took place in February, during the validation workshop which allowed partners, course validators and PAB members to meet and to be involved in validation activities.

The Independent Evaluator attended all the PAB meetings and had access to all the documentation produced under the various Work Packages, to all iterations of the validation process and to all successive versions of the steering documents.

3. PEDAGOGICAL ADVISORY BOARD

Summary of comments and recommendations of PAB members

During the project, the Pedagogical Board convened four times, via conference calls (using Flashmeeting) on 26th March (14:00 to 16:00 CET) and using Webex, on 10th June 2013 (11:00 to 12:00 CET) and face-to-face at EUN headquarters in Brussels on 12th June 2012 (15:00 to 17:00 CET) and on 11th February 2013 (15:00 to 17:00 CET). Prior to each of the meetings, WP1 (project management) put together a set of documents to inform the discussion.

3.1. 26th March 2012 meeting

3.1.1 General evaluation

The PAB discussed four documents pertaining to existing training materials, course development specifications, the course validation protocol and the quality assurance plan.

The findings of the PAB were mainly favourable but also included some suggestions and recommendations for the next phase of the project. The action points arising from the recommendations were as follows:

3.1.2 Action points

1. When developing course specifications further, the different leading partners should:
 - a) take into account research on how teachers learn best. An example of such a model, is the IDEA model (Inquire, Discover, Experiment, Acquire) (please see Appendix I for a brief explanation of the model);
 - b) make sure that they include examples of good practice.

QA observation:

- a) The steering from the PAB was fed into the next project partner meeting on April 3rd (reference April 3rd project minutes).
- b) The inclusion of examples of good practice in the specifications of all three courses was agreed by all project partners as a useful way forward and all partners.

- c) The course specification document was updated to take this best practice into account in all three course designs.
2. In the case of the IWB course, developers should be well aware that the ultimate beneficiaries of these professional development courses are students. This calls for a student-centred approach to the use of technology and should be reflected in course specifications.

QA observation:

- a) As above the steering was fed into the next partner project meeting (April 3rd). It was widely agreed that students are the ultimate target of all CPDLab courses. Their needs, abilities, interests and learning styles, therefore, should be taken into account in the course development process.
 - b) It was agreed that all courses should contain highly practical activities that can be used (some directly others indirectly) subsequently by the teacher with their students.
 - c) In the IWB course, the course design was discussed with Ministries of Education involved in the European Schoolnet IWB working group to take on board their ideas from working with schools. The course design structure was updated to include student-centred modules around for example, 'Communication and Collaboration' and 'Student-led assessment'.
 - d) The validation instruments have taken this on board in order to include questions for each of the courses on the benefits to students learning.
3. One of the members of the Pedagogical Board urged project partners to consider how to make sure that i) the course supporting materials developed once the courses were up and running, were somehow "quality-certified" and, ii) in the process of localising the courses, this same quality be maintained.

QA observation:

- a) WP4 - Quality Assurance presented a set of criteria and a checklist for project partners to discuss around these quality issues. This set of criteria and the checklist were then sent to and discussed by the PAB for further comments and suggestions.

3.2. 12th June 2012 meeting

3.2.1 General evaluation

In general, the Pedagogical Advisory Board was happy with the course development and validation processes. However, some points were raised, ranging from: terminology issues that may help in making the various documents being produced clearer at the different levels of the course structure; the need to ensure the quality of trainers; the future management of the set of courses and the knowledge library that will support them in terms of training materials.

3.2.2 Action points

1. Consider changing the use of the word 'levels' in the course specification document, and change some of the terms and concepts used in the Future Classroom Scenarios course so that they are closer to current usage in the iTEC project.

QA observation:

- a) The course specification document is an internal document to help with the course design process. It was agreed that the use of the word 'levels' has a particular context in education. However, in the context that the term is being used to help in the course design process, it is acceptable, as it means the different layers of a particular course, from course overview

(Level 1), to course plan (Level 2), to course support content (Level 3). The course specification document was updated to clarify this.

- b) WP10, one of iTEC Work Packages, in charge of “Support for implementing iTEC engaging Scenarios” has provided a document “to facilitate a consensus on the meaning of relevant terms used within the project among iTEC partners.” In the introduction, it is stated that this glossary “will serve as a common vocabulary to be used along all work packages in a way that (1) misunderstandings that are a consequence of using a term with different meanings are avoided, and (2) main concepts have only one interpretation among project partners.” It is strongly recommended that the Future Classroom Scenario course developers use this document as a basis for the terminology used in the specification.

2. Define criteria for selection of trainers. This is deemed crucial for the success of course delivery.

QA observation:

- a) This was followed through. The Project Coordinator drafted a trainer profile, to be discussed by all partners, identifying crucial factors in selecting trainers, both at European and national/regional level. The trainer profile was then tested.

3. Discuss the future management of the courses and knowledge bank, as part of the future exploitation plan.

QA observation:

- a) It was recommended that these issues should be amply discussed within the project, as part of a wider sustainability plan being developed in year two of the project.

4. Discuss whether the target audience should be reconsidered: instead of teachers, courses should be delivered to teacher trainers who, in turn, would train teachers at local/national level.

QA observation:

- a) This was discussed in depth at the beginning of the project, at a time when it was necessary to define the target with some precision. It was agreed that a cascade model, implying training trainers, should be adopted – identifying experienced trainers at national/regional level who can make full use of the specifications and training materials – seemed a practical and efficient resolution of this issue.

3.3. 11th February 2013 meeting

3.3.1 General evaluation

This meeting was held in Brussels, during the validation workshop that gathered almost all CPDLab course validators, project partners and PAB members.

PAB members were also involved in the pedagogical activities related to the three courses, which gave them a clear picture of the course practice. In general, the PAB was happy with the course development and validation processes, as well as with the pedagogical activities.

At this point, all courses were progressing well; final version completion rates were as follows: 90% for IWB, 75% for e-Safety (the course structure needed improvement) and 60% for FCS, which was lagging behind by approximately 2 months in order to benefit from iTEC results.

During the validation workshop, there was also a discussion on localisation involving teachers, project partners and some members of the PAB. The discussion drew on information from an earlier discussion on the same topic, at the European Schoolnet EMINENT conference in November 2012, where there was a workshop discussion on ‘Teacher Professional Development in the Digital Age’.

This workshop was planned as a key dissemination event for the CPDLab project to involve more interested Ministries of Education and industry partners in the three CPDLab courses, and to engage them in a discussion on the current thinking about Teacher Professional Development and the issue of localisation to help to inform planning for future work.

During EMINENT some points were raised. Teacher training is addressed in many different ways in each country. While in Portugal and Italy there is a more centralised approach, England, Finland and Norway have a regional one. The countries' interest in each course is also different. In Portugal, there is less interest in IWBs, while in Norway there seems to be more interest in this area. Italy, for example, stated that FCS and Web 2.0 would be best suited to their teachers. So localisation will necessarily be addressed differently in each country participating in CPDLab. The outcomes of the validation workshop discussion on localisation further supported this approach.

3.3.2 Action points

1. It will be important to indicate core/options, and/or alternative pathways or groupings within each of the course modular structures. Each of the courses will require guidance notes to explain the different pathways, to help countries/regions to select modules for localisation.
2. The concern continues with regards to the Comenius-funded, 5-day training courses. Models of learning highlighted in earlier steering (ref. March 26th 2012 PAB meeting minutes) around the recognised 'socio-cultural process', thought of in terms of "I.D.E.A" (Inquire, Discover, Experiment, Acquire), led to the the course development focus on practical and hands-on activities within the flexible, modular structure. This style and structure will help participants on the courses to practice activities during the courses and exchange ideas with peers, before taking back with them to practice in the classroom.
3. For the Comenius courses, the importance of allowing time for critical thinking and reflection within the five days is very important. Participants should also be encouraged to join local specialist interest groups upon their return to their home countries, to help them continue to develop their practice. For example, participants from Portugal on the eSafety course should be encouraged to join SeguraNet (a national eSafety project which is part of the inSafe network), on their return.
4. A Community of Practice was considered important to continue the learning after the course; however, the challenge is whether this is best done at national/regional level (local language/local teachers), or at a pan-European level linked to the Comenius courses. The experience of creating and sustaining a Community of Practice suggests this is best left at local level, encouraging the Comenius participants to join their local communities upon return as mentioned above.
5. The quality of the trainer remains key to the success of the courses. Within the 5-day Comenius courses there needs to be a balanced presence of two trainers, to help with change in style and pace, and bringing different expertise to the courses.
6. INDIRE will share the validation protocol which was used in the workshop (12th and 13th of February); the interaction between project leads took place as advised and deemed to be rather valuable.

QA observation:

- a) There are some difficulties in implementing Communities of Practice. Head teachers could award days and responsibilities to teachers with that mission.

- b) The course authors could maybe indicate which modules are core and provide suggestions about alternative pathways.
- c) Middle-management teachers, or teachers chosen by the Head Teacher, could be the targets of the eSafety course. This is because, while not many Head Teachers would take 5 days to attend the whole eSafety course, the issues raised in the course are best dealt with at a 'whole-school' level. Therefore, the involvement of the Head teacher in specifically delegating responsibility for attendance and subsequent implementation of good practice is essential.

3.4. 10th June 2013 meeting

3.4.1 General evaluation

This final meeting brought together partners and PAB members. The meeting took place using Webex conferencing software. This was the first time this software was used, and was really helpful to share documents.

Prior to the meeting, project partners/PAB members were asked to familiarise themselves with the final versions of each of the courses to help with any questions and the sign-off procedures. The meeting was based around a presentation which set out the stages of the validation and quality process, the adaptation of courses according to feedback, and was used to get approvals for each of the courses.

Both partners and PAB members were very happy with the Course development status. Each Course presented at the final stage a very different and improved structure when compared with the initial one.

At this point, the three courses were at the final stage of being put into correct formats and were being checked to confirm any permissions required on 3rd party content being used. The final activity with the expert teachers (course development and validation) of trialling a module/activity and completing the online questionnaire was completed on June 15th, although some teachers completed the activity in September due to school holidays; both EUN and project partners continue to trial and disseminate information on the courses. Some teacher trainers suggested by project partners have attended the Comenius 2013 summer courses to assist with this.

Project members were informed that the main feedback from the PAB and validation workshop in February centred around: a) clarifying alternative pathways within the modular structure to help with localisation – each course now includes this in the instructions; b) making the courses practical and making them available in time for experimentation and reflection – each of the courses has this built in; c) developing a trainers' guide for the courses to help with localisation – this was completed during the summer after the Comenius Summer courses, using an example sent by Teresa Pombo (DGE) that works well in Portugal as a template.

The final course outline diagrams (in Appendix V) were used to discuss the final course structures and show examples of the different pathways. For each of the three courses, IWB, eSafety and FCL courses, both project partners and PAB members were very happy that the feedback had been taken on board and felt that the resulting courses were very strong.

For the FCS course, there was a discussion on the Learning Activity modules being developed in the iTEC project by Aalto University. This development sits outside of the CPDLab project, and has a longer development timeframe. The first version has been released and is incorporated in the CPDLab course outline structure as there is a natural fit. It is part of the ongoing sustainability of the course, linking it to the wider training content being developed and tested in the iTEC project. During

the CPDLab validation workshop in February, the feedback was to give more time to the earlier modules. Juha-Matti Turpeinen from UOULU agreed that only a 'light' version of the Learning Activities modules is currently available. Jim Ayre from EUN referred to discussion within the iTEC project on the further development of this, to create a "Learning Activities Toolkit" and recommended that the Summer Comenius course be used to get feedback on the materials and in particular the best target audience for the toolkit. Will Ellis, iTEC project manager, has been working with UOULU on the FCS course to leverage the content and knowledge being developed within the iTEC project to add further value to the CPDLab FCS course. Juha-Matti agreed that this had worked very well and resulted in a much stronger phase 2 FCS course. Will Ellis who led the Comenius 2013 Summer FCS course is now using this feedback to help with the further development of the "Learning Activities Toolkit" by Aalto University as part of the iTEC project.

For each of the three CPDLab courses, approval was given.

Silvia Panzavolta, INDIRE, summarised the validation process and final report; the four stages covered for the final phase two validation report were (i) a validation questionnaire before the validation workshop; (ii) validation instruments applied during the validation workshop in February; (iii) the online survey completed following the piloting of module/activity by the expert teachers; and finally, (iv) a short questionnaire for teacher trainers coming on the Comenius 2013 courses to help gather information in support of onward localisation and exploitation of the courses.

Dorothy Cassells, project manager, summarised the sign-off checklist which has been followed successfully taking each of the three courses through: a) the validation and quality assurance process; b) applying the course specification as agreed by project partners and PAB; c) receiving good validation scores from the online surveys and through the validation instruments applied at the validation workshop. The final activity, which is applying the templates and checking references and permissions was completed ready for publishing the final versions of each of the three courses in September 2013.

The final activities in the project leading to completion at the end of September included the final deliverables: Validation report (INDIRE), Quality report (DGE), Independent Evaluation report (Barry Taylor), final versions to publish of each of the three courses and supporting trainer guide and Final report and financial report to the Commission (EUN, project partners).

3.4.2 Action points

1. feedback from the FCS Comenius Course on the draft Learning Activity modules should be captured to help with understanding of best audience and the development of the "Learning Activities Toolkit" within the iTEC project.
2. The PAB finished its activity with this meeting and was very happy with final results. Feedback from Comenius Courses being held in June 24th to July 12th would be appreciated.
3. A final meeting between partners, to be held Monday 9th September between 15:00 to 17:00 CEST will do the sign-off, schedule the final reporting and address courses exploitation.

QA observation:

- a) the feedback gained from the first Comenius run-through of all three courses will be invaluable. Following any training course, there are always changes. There will need to be resource and time to gather up any such feedback to make final changes prior to the publishing of the three courses in September.

4. INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR

4.1 Selection process

The Independent Evaluator was selected on the basis of an open procurement procedure, the terms of which were prepared by the Project Manager and discussed with WP4.

4.2 The Independent Evaluator's recommendations

All recommendations from the Independent Evaluator of CPD*Lab* are available in the Interim Report and Final Report from the Independent Evaluator (D4.3) published on the CPD*Lab* website.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Both first and second phases of the project – that of the course specification and development – have come to an end. Some challenges and risks were identified both by the Pedagogical Advisory Board and the Independent Evaluator. Both urged the project partners to take some actions which, from their respective point of view, are critical for the success of this undertaking. This document also makes observations based on selected action points raised by the PAB and how these actions have been addressed by the project.

Following the recommendations of the PAB, the third phase, that of the validation process, did a close scrutiny of processes, procedures and products. A new Focus Group (Course Validation Focus Group) was brought into action. The Pedagogical Advisory Board's and the Independent Evaluator's critical look was essential for the success of CPD*Lab*. The recommendation that all partners, core members and participating teachers (namely the Course Validation Focus Group members) work closely together with the PAB was followed, alongside the Independent Evaluator, who cast a "critical friend's look" at the whole quality assurance process.

Finally, the PAB advised project partners not only to take advantage of the excellent modularity of the three CPD*Lab* courses but to be very aware of each country's needs and characteristics (the differences between countries are very clear). The PAB also recommended that, in each country, special attention should be made to the trainers' profile and that a Teacher Trainer Guide might be helpful.

Work done by PAB members was a valuable tool ensuring the quality of the project activities development. A clear evolution from the very first drafts of the modules to the final course materials means that the project was well driven and successful.

5.1 Supporting documentation

The supporting minutes and actions resulting from the Pedagogical Advisory Board meetings are available upon request. They include:

- 6.1 Minutes of the 26th March 2012 Pedagogical Board meeting
- 6.2 Minutes of the 12th June 2012 Pedagogical Board meeting

- 6.3 Minutes of the 11th February 2013 Pedagogical Board meeting
- 6.4 Minutes of the 10th June 2013 Pedagogical Board meeting

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