



Enhancing Quality of Technology-Enhanced Learning at Jordanian Universities, EQTeL Capacity Building Programme

1. Introduction

The wider objective of the EQTeL is to promote reform and modernization of higher education in Jordan through the introduction of a national quality assurance system for Technology-Enhanced-Learning (TEL). One mechanism to achieve this objective is to provide training for relevant public authorities' personnel responsible for accreditation and evaluation of distance learning programs and build the capacity of trainers involved in distance education in Jordan. The expected outcomes of this training and capacity building are the following:

- Spreading the culture of TEL in Jordan in general and in six partner Jordanian universities in specific.
- Improving synergies with staff at HEAC in order to develop and review of quality-based distance and e-learning programmes.
- Enabling HEAC to execute its mandate in promoting the quality of higher education.
- Encouraging the facilitation of networking and information exchange between and among universities and higher education institutions.

A baseline analysis report was conducted in order to develop the capacity building program considering Jordanian needs. In the context of the EQTeL project, state-of-the-art of TEL in Jordanian universities is presented in order to prepare the foundation for setting guidelines and providing recommendations to establish an appropriate national quality assurance framework in accordance with the international context. The report is mainly based on the results of a national online survey that has profiled the landscape of the higher education system and targeted the state of play of TEL in 30 universities in the country. The proposed framework is aimed at accelerating reform and adopting change that facilitates the introduction of revised QA elements regarding TEL with up-to-date standards, methodologies and accreditation system.

2. Long-Term Capacity Building Plan

This long-term capacity building plan and vision aim at developing human resources and upgrading skills and capacities of university professors, technical assistants, and researchers. A series of capacity building activities (which is the main scope of this report) targets the Jordanian partner universities and other universities outside the consortium. QA capacity building will be performed at the following three levels the first being HEAC staff with activities that will include training on topics such as open and distance learning QA standards and processes, and developing quality assurance policies. HEAC Personnel will be classified in three main categories in order to receive the training required based on their education background, training, experience and skills. The three categories are:

- Entry-level Category: This will be for new employees aiming at providing fundamental of program learning outcomes, accreditation requirement and infrastructure needed.
- Intermediate Category HEAC employees in this category will receive training concentrating on the quality assurance of TEL.
- High-level Category: Trainees will study the modern trends in quality assurance standards as well as connection with the course learning outcomes, delivery method, assessment, evaluation and data analysis of courses and programmes.

Second, QA Reviewers/Experts who will be trained on topics that include responsibilities and roles of reviewers, activities and site visits, leadership and inter-team variations, benchmarking and learning



outcomes, especially for TEL courses and programmes. In addition, trainees are expected to acquire same experience as high-level Category of HEAC staff.

Finally, capacity building of HEIs with a scope that includes guiding HEIs to conduct self-study, preparing for external assessment visits, act on the recommendations of assessment reports, initiate, follow-up, and sustain quality culture, continuous interactions with HEAC, publication of guidelines and handbooks, and eLearning and distance learning standards. The trainees in this level can be divided into:

- Quality assurance bureaus personnel: They shall be given an appropriate training as well as orientation same as High-level category of HEAC staff.
- Faculty and Technical staff in HEIs: Groups from every institute will be provided with basic information about eLearning and distance learning methodologies in addition aspects of virtual management systems, environments, and tools.

3. Capacity Building Programme for Jordanian HEIs

In order to facilitate this long-term capacity building plan to become reality in the future, the EQTEL Project provides the Jordanian faculty members, administrative staff, technicians and students with an array of training, technical assistance and consulting services. The EQTeL project foresees transfer of knowledge and skills to Jordanian partners to go forward on the path for building the capacity for embracing Technology-Enhanced Learning and Teaching.

The EQTeL project will facilitate acquisition of Technology-Enhanced learning and teaching through access to information and facilities as well as practical and academic training. This support will enable the higher education institutions to effectively redesign their online courses to include state-of-the-art technologies. The EU Universities will assist the Jordanian partners by making available their experience, technical assistance and specialized skills., experts and facilities, as well as This exposure to varied practical training and experiments is essential for skill transfer to Jordan.

4.1. Implementation Capacity Building

4.1.1 Past Activities: The following visits have been made by the Jordanian partners to look into EU experience in QA in TEL in best practices:

- A visit to AQU in the period 10-14 June 2015 on guiding HEIs to conduct self-study preparing for external assessment visits, act on the recommendations of assessment reports, initiate and sustain quality culture, publication of guidelines and handbooks, training quality managers of institutions on eLearning and distance teaching standards.
- A visit to Turku University, Finland, in the period 23-28 August 2015 for on internal and external quality assurance as well as experiences on the management of e-Learning in Finland.
- A visit by a team from AHU, YU and HU Jordanian partners to ENQA in the period 2-6 September 2015.
- A visit to OCU in the period 7-11 February 2016 the focus of the tour was on guiding HEIs to integrate the national accreditation system with online learning provision and experiences with the pedagogical method for online courses.
- A visit to AQU in the period 18-19 July 2016 where consortium discussed the latest developments in the project as well as the role of advisory committee in the sustainability plan and eLearning centre. In addition to being exposed to EU experience in TEL field in general, the Jordanian partners have discussed during these visit the design, development, implementation, delivery and evaluation of the three pilot courses. The Jordanian partners have tuned the pilot courses based on suggestions and comments raised during discussions with EU and other Jordanian partners.

A workshop for HEAC staff and workers in QA and computer/eLearning centers and to was held in HEAC in May 2016 to give them a general idea about TEL-related QA standards and guidelines.



4.1.2 Future Activities

To ensure sustainability, ongoing comprehensive training must be provided to key target groups of the project, particularly related to using, developing and evaluating e-learning courses in universities and in HEAC as well as other organisations. This must be accompanied by educational outreach to decision makers. The suggested activities in capacity building for the project target groups in the remaining period of the project can be divided in following two types; study tour to EU and workshops in Jordan, and summarized as follows:

4.1.2.1 Study Tours to EU

Study Tour for an EU accreditation agency is proposed with the aim to deepen the knowledge in policies and regulations of TEL in EU level by sharing the EU experiences between partners and to discuss the possibility of adaption of TEL in the education system in Jordan. This study tour targets top administrative staff in HEAC, QA experts and HEIs quality managers in Jordan. The study tour last for two days and it is recommended that the program is planned based on the participants' profile (some part of the program is general for all participants and if necessary there can be differentiated program). The aim is to continue the developing work of the topic and more importantly to commit the participated organisations to the future work ahead.

A study Tour for an EU TEL-based university is also recommended with aim to get concrete ideas from the EU experience in how to design, deliver, and evaluate of TEL courses and programs in HEI's in Jordan. This tour is suitable for faculty member in HEIs in general and heads/chairs of TEL-related units or departments in HEIs. The study tour last for two days and it is recommended that the program is planned based on the participants' profile (some part of the program can be general for all participants and if necessary there can be differentiated program for participants). The aim is to continue the developing work that is related to the topic of the study tour and more importantly to commit the participated organisations to the future work ahead.

Another study Tour for an EU TEL-based university which aims to familiarize at the state-of-the-art technologies and tools in designing and implementation of TEL-based courses and programmes is suggested. This tour targets technical staff in TEL-related units (i.e., computer centers, E-learning Departments, IT staff). The study tour last for two days and it is recommended that the program is planned based on the participants' profile (some part of the program is general for all participants and if necessary there can be differentiated program). The aim is to continue the developing work that have started during EQTeL project and also to commit the participated organisations to the future work ahead.

4.1.2.2 Workshops in Jordan

A workshop on HEAC TEL-related standards and requirements is suggested which aims at familiarizing QA experts in Jordan with the current standards and requirements of TEL that HEAC adopted several years ago. In addition, this workshop can be a good opportunity to reveal the proposal of modified standards based on the framework prepared in this project considering the EU experience and discussions during study tours. The audience of this workshop is HEAC staff, QA managers in HEIs in Jordan, and QA experts. This workshop lasts for two days. The program is planned based on the participants' profile (some part of the program is general for all participants and if necessary there can be differentiated program). The aim is to commit the participated organisations to the future work ahead.

Another workshop on the Instructional Design of TEL courses and programmes is recommended which aims at promoting the concept of Instructional Design and its different stages (ADDIE: Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, Evaluation). Exchanging experience in teaching methodology among participants is another objective of this workshop. The participants of this workshop shall be the interested faculty member and QA managers in HEIs. In addition, the following are recommended:



- Workshop on the story/experience of the three pilot courses: The story of designing the three pilot course including challenges and obstacles and how they have been overcoming in addition to the best and common practices in designing, delivering and implementing such courses can be the subject of workshop targeting faculty members at HEIs. This also can be a chance to encourage other Jordanian universities outside the consortium to adapt these pilot courses that the project will make them available for all interested universities in Jordan. Real and live demonstrations of these pilot courses are another goal of this workshop. This workshop is one-day long.
- Workshop on the technologies and tools in TEL field: The objective of this workshop is to show the personnel working in the design and implementation of TEL courses and programmes the latest technology and tools utilized in this field in terms of hardware equipment and software packages and virtual management systems and environments. The audience of this workshop is the designers of TEL courses, web developers, and workers in computer and e-learning center. This workshop can be one of the important activities of the TEL Center that will be established in this project. This workshop lasts for one day. The content of the workshop is planned to ensure the commitment of the participated organisations to the future work ahead.
- Workshop on the capabilities of the TEL Center: TEL Center will be established as an item in the sustainability plan of this project. The capabilities of this center, its regulations and roles in promoting TEL in Jordan and the region is subject of a workshop that is organized to different stakeholders of TEL (Ministry of Higher Education, HEAC, HEIs, experts, NGOs, students). This workshop lasts for one day. The content of the workshop is planned to ensure the commitment of the participated organisations to the future work ahead.

4.2 Indicators of Achievement

1. Number of study tour visits and number of participants.
2. Number of workshops and number of participants.
3. Databases of designers, developers, QA experts and/or faculty members involved in TEL.
4. Record of all HEIs courses (or programmes) that was/will be delivered in one of TEL modes.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

This report presents the plan of action which was/will be discussed and agreed by the consortium. The focus will be on the appropriate training of Jordanian professionals in EU Universities in order to enable the transfer of knowledge, improve, develop and implement accreditation standards, guidelines and procedures for quality assurance of distance learning study programs according to EU practices and know-how in designing three on line courses to the Jordanian Universities as well as establish a framework for improving the quality of TEL and eLearning methodology on higher education institutions in Jordan.

The appropriate upgrading of skills and capacities will ensure that Universities in Jordan are placed in a position to offer quality education comparable to European standards which also meets the socioeconomic needs of its emerging knowledge-based society by provide training for relevant public authorities' personnel responsible for accreditation and evaluation of distance learning programs and build the capacity of trainers involved in distance education in Jordan issuing Certificates to the relevant public authorities personnel responsible for accreditation (reviewers, HEI QA Centers, and HEAC staff) in charge about Quality assurance and evaluation of distance learning programs can be a factor in encouraging different stakeholders to participate in these workshops and take this trend towards TEL more seriously. Establishing a database of different stakeholders working in TEL is another legitimate outcome of these workshops.

6. Program Duration



The proposed duration to complete this program is six months from the date of program approval. In this context, evaluation and re-evaluation at frequent interval will be in place to ensure achieving the maximum planned effectiveness of this program.