

## **Minutes of Research, Development & Delivery Group Meeting**

**Venue :** Enterprise Estonia, Tallinn

**Date :** 08 May 2008

### **Present :**

Jayne Stocks (Chair)	Sheffield Hallam University (SHU)
Cathy Guthrie (Secretary)	TMI
Liz Buchanan	Tourist Board Training Ltd (TBT)
Heli Tooman	Pärnu College (joined part way through)
Marc Wells	Sheffield Hallam University.
Lluís Prats Planagumà	University of Girona
Silvia Scaramuzzi	University of Florence
Gea Kammer	Pärnu College

### **Apologies:**

Muharrem Tuna	Sungurlu Vocation & Technology Development Association
Nadia Theuma	University of Malta
Philip Goulding	Sheffield Hallam University
Jordi Cassassayas	APTALC
Heli Muristaja	Pärnu College

## **Key Actions/Decisions**

### **Item 1**

- **KD/MW to liaise and post notice advising when the VLE would be unavailable due to migration to a dedicated server**
- **MW to insert sections of the Site Introduction video as help items for the appropriate parts of the site.**
- **CMG to draft a protocol for using the chat room(s) and the discussion boards**

### **Item 2:**

- **CMG to ask HM for guidance and then update the VLE Assessment Briefing and other sections as necessary, and advise all local tutors and participants.**

### **Item 3:**

- **CMG to check with HM and HT whether it would be acceptable under Tartu University's regulations for local tutors to record their grades and comments for each submission on the agreed marking grid and submit these, translated into English, to HM for moderation.**
- **CMG then to circulate the decision, marking grid and revised submission/marking timetable**
- **ALL to confirm by e-mail that they are able to comply with the new system, and will not post assessment feedback to participants until the grades have been approved by HM.**

**Item 4:**

- **International chat dates were agreed: 10 June, 8 July, 12 August, 9 September.**
- **HM to advise local tutors of topics and questions to be covered in the online chats, and raised on the discussion boards.**
- **Local tutors to translate and run own country discussion boards and online chats**
- **MW to set up online chat rooms for each country in the VLE**

**Item 5:**

- **SJ, MT, LP, SS to deliver local induction seminars and distribute the remaining candidate handbooks no later than Friday 23 May.**

**Item 6:**

- **All partners to provide correct address and signatory details to CMG by Friday 12 May**
- **CMG to investigate ISBN/ISDN registration**

**Item 7:**

- **SS to provide CMG with additional material**
- **Strong points from the report to be used for valorisation work**

**Item 8:**

- **LP to ensure the Entrepreneurship and Innovation module was validated by Girona University at 7.5 ECTS or above before the start of delivery at the beginning of February 2009**
- **LP to send the outline of the module to CMG for circulation to the other HE partners**
- **Module outline to include at least one definition of entrepreneurship**

**Item 9:**

- **ALL to respond promptly to requests from LP, CMG or the Project Manager to provide information or materials to ensure timetable could be met**

**Item 10:**

- **HM/HT/GK to confirm Estonia local tutor to CMG by 23 May**
- **MT to confirm Turkey local tutor to CMG by 23 May**
- **SS, MT to send CV for their local tutors to CMG by 23 May**

**Item 11**

- **CMG to follow up Brussels contact for accreditation**
- **CMG to ask industry partners for contacts for industry endorsement**

## **1. VLE Training Session**

- 1.1 The meeting included a training session on the VocMat VLE in advance of the induction session the following day. The VLE had been moved from Blackboard to Moodle and considerably revised to make it more user friendly. The site was quite slow because it was currently on a shared server. MW advised that the site would be migrating to a dedicated server very shortly, which should improve its speed. A notice would be posted on the discussion board to alert all participants when the transfer would be taking place, as it would mean the site being temporarily unavailable.
- 1.2 KD confirmed that user name and log in details had been e-mailed to all participants and a sheet would be available at the induction seminar.
- 1.3 A short video Site Introduction with voiceover had been uploaded to guide participants through the site. LP suggested that it might be helpful to break up the video so that a short clip could be run as a help item for each section of the site. This was agreed.
- 1.4 MW confirmed that the online chat room did not require Java plug-in, so there should not be a technical issue preventing participation. However, it was still possible some participants might have issues with their organisation's firewall or IT security policy which could prevent them taking part.
- 1.5 It was suggested that there should be some sort of protocol for participation in the chat room and discussion boards. Most participants would be familiar with the basics, such as not writing in capital letters (equates to shouting) or making rude or offensive comments and so on. CMG agreed to draft a protocol document for uploading to the site.

### **VLE Action Points**

- **KD/MW to liaise and post notice advising when the site would be unavailable due to migration to a dedicated server**
- **MW to insert sections of the Site Introduction video as help items for the appropriate parts of the site.**
- **CMG to draft a protocol for using the chat room(s) and the discussion boards**

## **1.0 Minutes of Meeting Held 07 March 2008**

- 1.1 After introductions, the Minutes of the last meeting were approved and adopted as a correct record.

## **2.0 Strategic Management Module – Assessment**

- 2.1 HT and HM suggested a change to the brief for the report participants had to

submit for assessment. Building on feedback from the previous project, they wanted to give participants the chance to apply the learning to their own organisation or to an organisation of their choice, rather than forcing them to write about the budget airline industry which might not be very relevant to them. This change was approved and welcomed by the RD&D Group, as whilst it changed the topic for the assignment it did not change the level or the amount of work required.

- 2.2 As had indicated that participants would have to complete the various Topic Activities in order to achieve 7.5 ECTS for the Strategic Management module, CMG had asked HM to indicate the weighting, or split of marks between the final assignment and the topic activities. LB then queried whether this reflected the ratio of credits between the end of course assignment and the activities. There was considerable discussion of the additional element to the assessment. It was felt that adding more tasks for assessment would equate to a change in the module. The first pilot group had achieved 7.5 credits purely on the submission of the final report, whereas now the new pilot group were being asked to produce more work for assessment to earn the same number of ECTS credit points. This would be inconsistent and the RD&D Group agreed that there should only be one piece of assessed work.
- 2.3 One solution to the need to retain one piece of assessed work but meet Tartu's requirements for amount of student input would be for tutors to provide formative assessment, i.e. non marked feedback, on written topic activities as the module progressed, but this would be very time consuming. This was why the portfolio approach had been suggested. The addition of required reading had extended the student input required for Tartu to award 7.5 ECTS for HRM in the previous project; it was suggested that a similar approach for this module could be for the topic activities to form the basis of Discussion Board and Online Chat participation, with the report remaining the single piece of assessed written work. Participants would receive formative feedback on their participation and comments in the Discussion Boards and Online Chat sessions. This would also encourage participation in the Discussion Boards, as it would be a way in which the participants could demonstrate their input in terms of time.

**Action:**

- **CMG to ask HM for guidance and then update the VLE Assessment Briefing and other sections as necessary, and advise all local tutors and participants.**

**3. Strategic Management – Marking, Moderation and Feedback**

- 3.1 The procedure for moderating the assignment marking had been agreed at the previous meeting, whereby each local tutor would provide their top, bottom and a middle range scripts to the subject leader, translated where necessary. However, even translating the top, middle and bottom scripts could cause problems as there was no allowance for this in the project budget. Moreover, the existing system would make it difficult to develop VocMat as a commercial product as a lead university would be required all the time to moderate submissions. Nevertheless,

it was important that there was some form of moderation, for quality control.

- 3.2 JS referred to the quality control procedures in the UK, where there is an external examiner. This was not common elsewhere, but a compromise might be to have someone internal to each university but independent of the module act as internal examiner. However, even this might not be possible. LP suggested that if the local tutors all used the same criteria, and could provide evidence, this might be acceptable to Tartu. CMG pointed out that the marking criteria had been agreed at the previous meeting, and suggested that each tutor should use the same marking grid to record their comments and grade for each submission, then translate their marking grids with comments and grades into English and send them to HM for moderation/approval. This might be sufficient to satisfy the University of Tartu.
- 3.3 CMG undertook to discuss this suggestion with HM and HT. It was likely that the marking grid and moderation procedure would need to be circulated after the meeting, so everyone would have to confirm their agreement and ability to comply with the requirements. Thereafter CMG would need to make any revision to the module submission timetable and circulate it as appropriate.
- 3.4 Whichever method was agreed, local tutors would need to be careful not to post any feedback on their assignments for participants until the moderation had been completed and grades confirmed.
- 3.5 CMG had circulated a timetable for assignment submission, marking, translating for moderation where necessary, and a deadline for final feedback to be posted for each participant. There were some inaccuracies in the dates, so these would be corrected and the right dates circulated to all participants and tutors
- 3.6 During the VLE training session, it was agreed that local tutors would download the assignments posted by their pilot group participants, rather than MW downloading centrally and e-mailing them to the tutors.

**Actions:**

- **CMG to check with HM and HT whether it would be acceptable under Tartu University's regulations for local tutors to record their grades and comments for each submission on the agreed marking grid and submit these, translated into English, to HM for moderation.**
- **CMG then to circulate the decision, marking grid and revised submission/marketing timetable**
- **ALL to confirm by e-mail that they are able to comply with the new system, and will not post assessment feedback to participants until the grades have been approved by HM.**

#### **4. Strategic Management – Discussion Board and Online Chat**

- 4.1 HM had suggested dates for transnational online chat sessions, and that the first one should be at 4 pm Estonian time. She and the local tutors could then assess how many pilot group people had been able to take part, and perhaps set a different time of day for the next one, to allow for the time difference. The dates were:
- 10 June
  - 8 July
  - 12 August
  - 9 September
- 4.2 LP and SS noted that almost all of August was a holiday period for Catalonia and Spain. After discussion it was agreed that it would be very difficult to try to avoid all holiday periods in all the partner countries. As HM was subject leader, it was agreed to go ahead with the dates she suggested.
- 4.3 The local tutors would look to HM to give the lead on the topics or questions to be used in the discussion boards, as well as for the programmed online chats. Local tutors would then be able to translate and run the same discussions/online chats in their own country discussion boards and online chats.
- 4.4 It was agreed to set up local chat rooms, i.e. an Italian, Catalan, Maltese and Turkish chat rooms in addition to the main chat room.
- 4.5 SS raised a point about the level of English of participants. She felt it was important that tutors, the subject leader and workshop leaders checked from time to time that everyone had understood what was being said or discussed. There was already a slight issue with some of the Italian pilot group participants who had been told they could do the programme in Italian, but would shortly discover that the handbooks and most of the VLE outside the subject content and their specific were in English.

#### **Actions:**

- **International chat dates were agreed: 10 June, 8 July, 12 August, 9 September.**
- **HM to advise local tutors of topics and questions to be covered in the online chats, and raised on the discussion boards.**
- **Local tutors to translate and run own country discussion boards and online chats**
- **MW to set up online chat rooms for each country in the VLE**

#### **5.0 Strategic Management Induction**

- 5.1 All local tutors were expected to hold induction sessions in their countries for those participants who were unable to come to Tallinn or join the video conference sessions. JS reported that induction would take place at Sheffield Hallam for the UK participants on 22 May. Invitations were being sent out. LP suggested holding the Catalan one at the end of May. LB said that this was too late, as it would mean

that those participants did not have as much time to complete the work as the others. It was agreed that Friday 23 May was the very latest date on which induction sessions could be held.

- 5.2 KD confirmed that all materials for those participants who were not attending Tallinn had been sent to their local tutors.
- 5.3 There were two workshop sessions as part of the induction seminar. CMG explained that first of these was intended to be team building, to allow participants to get to know each other a little, and to share concerns or ideas they had about how to make time for study, or other possible things which might get in their way. The second one was intended to give all the participants a chance to log on to the VLE, to try the chat room and the discussion boards. She acknowledged that perhaps not all local tutors and/or workshop leaders might have received the briefing notes she had prepared and would ensure these were sent out earlier for any future sessions.
- 5.4 The University of Malta would be joining the seminar via video conference link, and the Turkish local tutor had been instructed to join by video conference link even if there were no pilot group people with him.

**Actions:**

- **JS, MT, LP, SS to deliver local induction seminars and distribute the remaining candidate handbooks no later than Friday 23 May.**

## **6. Intellectual Property Rights Agreement**

- 6.1 The VocMat end of project IPR Agreement had now been signed by all partners.
- 6.2 CMG had circulated all partners by e-mail asking them to bring or confirm address details for the front of the Agreement and who would be signing the Agreement on behalf of their Institution. She had not received that information, so all partners were asked to provide it to her following the meeting and no later than 12 May.
- 6.3 LP suggested that it should be possible to register the VocMat material so that it was VocMat copyright, and obtain an IABN/ISDN number for the module materials. CMG undertook to investigate this further and report back to the next meeting.

**Actions:**

- **All partners to provide correct address and signatory details to CMG by Friday 12 May**
- **CMG to investigate ISBN/ISDN registration**

## **7. Research Report**

- 7.1 CMG had circulated the final draft of the Research Report. SS would be sending some additional material for the Italian section, and LB had a number of comments which she would pass to CMG after the meeting, largely to do with making it clear that VocMat 2 was a new project and not a continuation of VocMat 1. LB also felt that the points made at section 5.21 of the report, regarding the way respondents valued the availability of Europe-wide qualifications was very strong, and could be worked on for the valorisation of the project.
- 7.2 It was agreed that the Research Report would not be posted in the public area of the VocMat site until these amendments and corrections had been made.

### **Actions:**

- **SS to provide CMG with additional material**
- **Strong points from the report to be used for valorisation work**

## **8. Module 2 – Development and Content**

- 8.1 Based on the results of the research exercise, the group confirmed that this module should cover Entrepreneurship and Innovation. LP confirmed that he was willing and able to be subject leader and develop the module. He was investigating options for validation to ensure the module could be worth 7.5 ECTS. Normally at Girona elective modules were only validated at 5.0 ECTS. LP was checking whether it would be possible to increase this to 7.5 ECTS. Otherwise, the module would have to go for full validation, in which case it would earn 9.0 ECTS because Girona used blocks of 3 ECTS credits. LP was confident that he would be able to meet the timetable within his university for validation so that the module would be validated before the start of delivery at the beginning of February 2009.
- 8.2 LP had already started to develop the module outline and so far, his suggestions were five main subject areas, as follows:
- Entrepreneurship and Product Development
  - New Product Management (sub topics: Special Interest Tourism, Experience Tourism Products)
  - Innovation in the Tourism Industry (sub topics: Innovation in Tourism Organisations; Innovation in Destinations; Innovation in the Experience Service Industry)
  - Innovation Determinants in the Tourism Industry
  - How to Measure Innovative Performance in the Tourism Industry
- 8.3 LP suggested that the assignment might be to develop a case analysis which should contain these three elements: detecting innovation; generation indicators to measure performance of the company or organisation; the level of innovation.
- 8.4 LB asked what the process or framework for developing the module would be. In other words, what sort of material would LP be looking for the other HE partners to provide such as case studies, reading materials, etc? It was agreed that LP would

let CMG have the framework, or outline, of the module. She would then circulate this to the other HE partners. LB suggested there would need to be some definition, or definitions, of entrepreneurship with the framework, as an entrepreneur was different things in different countries.

**Actions:**

- **LP to ensure the Entrepreneurship and Innovation module was validated by Girona University at 7.5 ECTS or above before the start of delivery at the beginning of February 2009**
- **LP to send the outline of the module to CMG for circulation to the other HE partners**
- **Module outline to include at least one definition of entrepreneurship**

**9. Module 2 – Timetable**

9.1 The module was set to start on 6 February 2009. MW would therefore need to upload the module material to the VLE during January 2009. Translations would have to be completed by the end of December. The options for translation were either to translate directly from Catalan to each of the other partner languages, or to translate into English first, and then into the other languages. The second option would be less expensive, but would place additional time pressure on LP, as it would add a further month into the time for translation and so give less time for actual development. Moreover, LP would be developing the module content at the same time as supporting the Catalan pilot group in his role as their local tutor.

9.2 The following production timetable was agreed for Module 2:

19 September	Module content finalised and sent to project manager
22 September	Project manager goes to tender for translations
Mid October	Module content goes for translation into English
Mid November	English version goes for translation into other partner languages
Mid December	Translations returned to project manager
End December	All module content to MW
End January 2009	All module content uploaded onto VLE

9.3 LP felt able to meet this tighter timetable, provided there was good support from all the other education partners in providing reference material and case study examples to contextualise the content.

9.4 If this proved too difficult, then it might be necessary to fall back on translating all the content direct from Catalan to the other languages. LB stressed that it was therefore extremely important that all the other university partners supported LP by providing material when asked and without undue delay.

- 9.5 Due to budget constraints, it was agreed that there would be no central induction seminar at the start of Module 2. The majority of pilot group participants had signed up for both modules, so would already know each other, and be familiar with the VLE. If it proved necessary to recruit new pilot group participants, local tutors could organise induction sessions within their country.

**Actions:**

- **ALL to respond promptly to requests from LP, CMG or the Project Manager to provide information or materials to ensure timetable could be met**

**10. Quality Assurance**

- 10.1 Some of the aspects listed under Quality Assurance, such as marking and moderating, had been dealt with earlier on the Agenda. However, for the record, the local tutors in each country were confirmed as:

Catalonia	Lluís Prats Planaguma	Both modules
Estonia	To be confirmed	Both modules
Italy	Elena Livi	Strat Man
	Lucia Barra	Ent & Inn
Malta	Nadia Theuma	Both modules
Turkey	To be confirmed	
UK	Philip Goulding	Both modules

- 10.2 It was important that the local tutors should be identified and confirmed as soon as possible, as the first module was starting the next day.

- 10.3 All education partners had previously been asked to forward the curriculum vitae of local tutors to CMG for sharing with the subject leaders. So far, of those whose CVs were not included with the project application, CMG had only received CVs from Philip Goulding and Muharrem Tuna. The remaining local tutors were asked to provide CVs as soon as possible after the meeting.

**Actions:**

- **HM/HT/GK to confirm Estonia local tutor to CMG by 23 May**
- **MT to confirm Turkey local tutor to CMG by 23 May**
- **SS, MT to send CV for their local tutors to CMG by 23 May**

## **11. Accreditation**

- 11.1 Each module was being validated by the subject leader and all participants registered with the subject leader's university, i.e. Tartu for Strategic Management and Girona for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.
- 11.2 After the previous meeting, Maria Pia Chircop from FHRD, Malta, had provided contacts in Brussels for following up on Europe wide accreditation. CMG had not yet been able to do this, but would do so following this meeting. She would also e-mail all industry partners to ask for contacts for industry endorsement of the VocMat curriculum and delivery model.

### **Actions**

- **CMG to follow up Brussels contact for accreditation**
- **CMG to ask industry partners for contacts for industry endorsement**

## **12. Any Other Business**

- 12.1 LB advised that there had been considerable interest in participation from Latvian tourist industry personnel. As Latvia was not a partner country, she and CMG had suggested to the Latvian applicants that if they were willing to pay a commercial rate, and there were enough of them to form a viable group, they could approach Daina at Latturinfo to see whether her university would be willing to deliver the module(s) as a commercial product.