TEMPUS BLATT

be tech savvy

TEMPUS BLATT

PROJECT SUMMARY

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Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?

That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.

'Alice in Wonderland'

Tempus

PROJECT RATIONALE

The Blended Learning Advanced Teacher Training (BLATT) project provides a strong stimulus towards the implementation of the student-centered educational strategy, expanding a range of the educational tools which could help this process. Student-centered methods are the intrinsic facets of most of the e-learning applications. Through use of online methods students are in control of their own progress by covering the subject matter personally, by having the subject presented in the way that corresponds to their own learning style preferences and pace.

This is also the step towards not only more attractive and engaging work but more efficient education. Most of the content is to be delivered through tasks in a solution-orientated and collaborative work-promoting ethos. The e-learning component of a blended-learning approach requires continuous contact between educators and learners; a significant proportion of contact hours will be contracted during out-of-class time and are dependent neither on
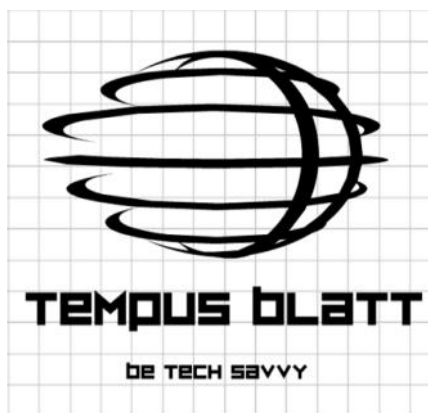
physical nor geographic location.

The project aims, however, not only to integrate new methodology, but to induce rigorous and thorough changes in the current curricula which are thus expected to become models for the wider curricular reform throughout the university. This is to be achieved through closely monitored alignment process and the implementation of wider theories of learning and through changes in assessment methodology.
assessment methodology.

The EU countries involved in the project will have an opportunity to reflect on their practice as they support professional development of our teachers and help us grow toward a more in-depth implementation of the Bologna principles.

The Project revolves around two main areas:
1. The systematic implementation of educational technology
2. The revision of learning outcomes in accordance with the blended learning approach for the selected courses.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

WIDER OBJECTIVE
1. Systematic implementation of a blended learning approach at the University of Pristina in compliance with the Bologna precepts.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES
1. Improvement and enhancement of the learning and teaching practices through pedagogically innovative and sound use of educational technology

2. Promotion of student-centered learning.
3. Introduction of the continuous (formative) assessment of student progress.
4. Meeting and overcoming the challenges of a dispersed university by providing close monitoring and continuity in learning.
5. Consolidating Bologna, especially ECTS across dispersed University

6. Through UPKM's internal quality insurance, processes monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of blended learning
7. Confirmation of the efficiency of the blended learning approach
8. Preparation for publication, plus additional research
9. Necessary revision
10. Publication

WP 1: National and international research on blended learning

The project staff will review existing research and analysis of the blended learning approach in theory as well as visit an Maribor University for a closer look of the practice in the field. In addition, the findings of such an extensive review will be examined and considered towards working models for the UPKM focus group who will draft an action plan accordingly.

1. Kick off meeting
2. Survey of the blended learning theory
3. Study visit to Maribor University
4. Focus group

Blended learning is realized in teaching and learning environments where there is an effective integration of different modes of delivery, models of teaching and styles of learning as a result of adopting a strategic and systematic approach to the use of technology combined with the best features of face to face interaction.

(Krause, 2008)

WP 2: Creation of sample blended courses and webinars at UPKM

The UPKM will take the efforts to pilot the first blended courses of high quality. This is considered as the most important part of the implementation since the outcome of the whole project depends on how systematically and efficiently the courses are organized, their attractiveness for both students and teachers and the tangible effects on the learning process. The greatest attention is to be devoted to the e-component of blended courses, namely, the creation of the comprehensive learning materials database, the choice of e-tools and the composition of learning inventory framework. Along with this, the general re-designing of the existing syllabi (particularly learning outcomes) and the assessment methodology will be executed in order to match the new development of learning strategies.

1. Procuring the equipment
2. Creating the virtual learning environment
3. Expert workshops in implementation of ed tech
4. Creating course materials
5. Organizing digital library for selected courses
6. Defining learning inventory
7. Redesign if the syllabi
8. Defining the framework of assessment
9. Piloting the courses
10. Peer review by the EU partner universities

WP 3: ANALYSIS

The project team members will perform an in-depth analysis of the pilot courses in attempt to determine the success rate of the blended learning approach in addition to ironing out the potential issues in the delivery of such courses.

Data obtained by multiple regression analysis will help to define the parameters, methods and procedures best related to the student success rate, thus providing a statistically-based and verifiable tool for quality promotion.

Internal quality assurance system at the University is in place owing to implementation of TEMPUS PIQAS (511350-TEMPUS-1-2010-1-XK-TEMPUS-JPGR) project consisting of University administrative Quality Assurance Office and University Quality Assurance Commission with academic representatives from each faculty.

Quality Assurance of blended courses will be performed in accordance with National Council for Higher Education Guidelines for Quality Assurance Standards, National Council for Higher Education Distant Learning Accreditation Standards and University Quality Assurance Manual. The Manual itself is being finalized as the outcome of TEMPUS PIQAS project and will express both European and National Quality Assurance and Control Standards.

1. Critical comparison of EU partner universities
2. Formulating check lists for self-evaluation
3. Measurement and comparison of student satisfaction
4. Comparative analysis
5. Statistical comparison of the learning outcomes
6. Definition of the best progress indicators
7. Publishing the results of the analysis

"Good teaching may overcome a poor choice of technology but technology will never save bad teaching."

Tony Bates

WP 4: CREATION OF FINAL BLENDED COURSES

Taking into account the teacher training, experience gained from the piloting stage as well as the information gathered through the analysis, the project member will finalize the blended courses in terms of the syllabus, learning outcomes, teaching materials, methodology and delivery.

1. Integration of the assessment results
2. Integration of the research findings
3. Feedback by the EU partner universities
4. Round table discussion on the sample courses

WP 5: BLENDED COURSE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

This work package should ensure the sustainability of the project by creating a program of pedagogic training for teaching staff of the UPKM outside the project, though the stimulus for is provided by this project. Thereby, leading the university to newer professional ventures in the reform of higher education in the region.

1. SWOT analysis and planning
2. Self-evaluation report
3. Workshops on pedagogically sound use of ed tech
4. Technological aspects of blended courses
5. Workshops on creating course materials

"How will we train all the teachers? Answer: It's simple. Have teachers train teachers. "
Heather Wolpert-Gawron

WP 6: DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

The main dissemination objectives will be: attracting primary target group – existing and potential students, teachers at UPKM, relevant university and governmental bodies; as well as secondary target group – other educational institutions in the region and future employers; boosting public awareness of the importance of going digital at the tertiary level of education. It will also contribute to the actual European policy to use ICT to enhance learning in higher education and support traditional universities to implement virtual component of teaching. The development of e-learning and blended learning courses and future programs is also in line with the widespread regional efforts on accessing European Commission Life Long Learning Program aiming at democratization of higher education. Finally, with the experiences and practices gained through this project, the University is well on the way to become a training centre for the lectures from many secondary and tertiary educational institutions already expressing interest in developing digital learning in the future.

1. BLATT website
2. Social networking
3. Promotional campaign
4. Monograph on blended learning and other scientific publications

WP 7: ENSURING THE PROJECT'S SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability motivates great confidence within and beyond the project. First, there is the transformational capacity that BL heralds and transacts, so vital to aspects of academic life in Mitrovica. Initially the problems associated with a dispersed university and its concomitants in enrolment, retention, pedagogics, qualification and employability, will be answered by BL in terms of the University's ability to address holistic studentship. Second, there are undeniable economic factors in Kosovo which require students to have experience in flexible learning and be adaptable in the work place. Third, there is the critical edge culture which has the potential to re-address both teaching and learning across the University, which creates enormous challenges for academic and support staff. Fourth, while lecturer preparation levels in pedagogics will surely intensify, more space ultimately will be created for research and other ongoing University business and academic endeavor. Fifth, the new-world student - those within widening participation and increased age-range participation - will find the individualized methodologies attractive and encouraging in their quests for a higher education qualification. Last, and vitally, UPKM will strongly align with its European partners and stakeholders and more freely encourage Bologna mobility.

1. Systematization of BL
2. BL policy
3. Accreditation
4. BLATT centre

WP 8: QUALITY AND CONTROL MONITORING OF THE PROJECT

The BLATT Management board will be constantly reported on the project progress and achievements both during regular yearly assessment meetings and by delivering reports from the EACEA Monitoring Visits. As in other TEMPUS Projects implemented at the University the project staff reports on monthly basis to the NTO on project progress and project issues; these reports represent a useful monitoring tool and could as well be delivered to Management Board. The Consortium will hand in a self-evaluation report on the performance and effectiveness in executing the project's planned activities in a timely manner. The University BLATT Center will closely cooperate with University QA Office.

1. Self-evaluation
2. External evaluation

WP 9: MANAGEMENT OF THE PROJECT

The kick-off meeting will provide guidelines for the project work, making sure that each member is familiar with and agrees upon strictly obeying the project's time and financial schedule, methods of communicating, dissemination, sustainability, quality control and monitoring. Consortium will nominate the key personnel for each of the outcomes so that the tasks are well-balanced and the sense of ownership intensified.

The efficient management, the project will have the academic manager, in charge of the overall organization and coordination tasks, of timely and quality realization of all the project's outcomes. AC will work continuously together with the lead partners and the Tempus BLATT centre, supervising and monitoring the work, collecting and disseminating information in cooperation with QA office within the partnership.

1. Board meetings
2. Consortium meetings
3. Coordination bodies
4. Schedule

EU PARTNERS AND THEIR ROLES IN THE PROJECT

University of Maribor has an outstanding reputation in organizing international cooperation. Within the project, UMA will serve as a leading partner. The consortia can build upon the current EU projects experience of UMA, the cross border eCollaboration, and the expected up-coming experience in the European Network of Living Labs The mission of the University of Maribor is to promote modern application of the ICT in educational processes.

Linnaeus University undertakes to offer web-based seminars for teachers on a number of issues concerning teaching and learning online. Teachers experienced in e-learning/blended learning, pedagogics and methodology will provide insights into best practice and facilitate discussion. The focus will be on helping teachers create stimulating online learning environments using freely available Web 2.0 tools as well as using learning managements systems and video-conferencing tools.

PROJEKT Kompetenz.eu is a consultancy and facilitator for international cooperation with a strong focus on project communication and higher education. It has been a provider of live online trainings for several years. The team members organize international and national webinars in the fields of culture, politics and higher education.
The interdisciplinary team is based in Salzburg, Austria.

The University of Bologna Service for Disabled and Dyslexic Students will bring into the project a dual contribution: it will provide contents, strategies, technologies and policies for promoting and implementing the access of disabled people to higher education; it will extend some of the most successful practices implemented for disabled students, to the wider catchment area of students in a context of geographical dispersion, as that in which University of Pristina operates.

UPKM TEAM

The project personnel very much looks forward to the strong and vibrant team spirit that the selection brings together towards a most promising future.

The lead partner UPKM, has proved an outstanding survivor in higher education and exceptional developer in a short space of time. Since the departure from Pristina in June 1999, the University has re-established faculties, been successful in important Tempus activities and is becoming a developmental voice for higher education in the region. UPKM is very much at the heart of economic rejuvenation in the region and is anxious to extend its appeal to employers and investors. Partners are willing to assist UPKM in a process of further modernization within the spirit of wider impetus for students, employers, investors and stakeholders. In complement to the very evident experience and skills, colleagues involved are facilitative, responsive and innovative.