

# VitaGLOBAL

## Work Package 5

### Quality Plan.

## Project Quality Monitoring

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**Submitted by:**



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## 1. Project Aims and Objectives

The General Objective of the VitaGLOBAL Project is: To contribute to local development by enhancing study programmes in agricultural science and, specifically, viniviculture, which are of strategic economic importance in Europe, South America, South Africa and Georgia.

The Specific objectives are:

- SO1) To build capacity to develop joint programmes in viniviculture and oenology at the masters level, so as to internationalise and integrate curricula, widen mobility opportunities for students and staff and ultimately internationalise the university contribution to local development
- SO2) To build the capacity of HEIs to sharpen their impact on local development in the viniviculture sector, via multi-lateral knowledge transfer and in conjunction with industry and other socio-economic partners.
- SO3) To consolidate a diverse international network of higher education institutions (HEIs) with a common interest to contribute to local development and a shared commitment to agricultural science, viniviculture and oenology, as a base for academic cooperation and industry partnerships.

The project responds to the needs set out in Part E in that it a) creates a unique consortium that brings together universities from diverse and mostly non-urban regions in South America, Georgia, Europe and South Africa b) allows these universities to map and compare their contribution, via teaching and research in the agricultural and specifically the viticultur sector, to local development and local economies, c) develops a joint study programmes in viticulture (of relevance to all partner countries) so as to foster deeper 'North-South-emerging country' strategic partnerships in higher education and create a study programme that is truly unique.

It responds equally to Europe policy priorities for higher education internationalisation and regional development, as it does to partner country priorities for internationalising and modernizing study programmes, and improving

the viticultural sector in regions such as la Rioja and Salta, Argentina and the north of Chile, as well as Telavi Georgia.

## 2. Rationale of a Quality Plan for the VitaGLOBAL Project and Roles

The Quality Plan of the VitaGLOBAL Project has to be the outcome of a collective effort. It must show the partners of the Consortium as well as the EACEA the project is being implemented (and eventually has been finished) according to the plan approved.

### ***Who is in charge of the Quality Plan?***

The Quality Plan and its corresponding Quality Monitoring will be coordinated by the Quality Committee of the Project, chaired by OBREAL/GLOBAL and made up by ANECA, Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and Asociación de Universidades Grupo Montevideo (AUGM) will be in charge of designing the internal evaluation criteria and indicators to monitor the progress of the project and the timely provision of the deliverables.

However, all the partners of the Consortium are involved both sequentially and in a systemic way. The Quality Plan of the Project is a shared responsibility of all the partners in charge of the various WPs as well as individually as mere partners of a WP.

The Quality Committee has to issue the templates and the documents related to show that the objectives are being gradually met, but it's up to the partners involved in a particular WP to show the fulfilment of the goals and the deliverables of their WPs.

The duty of the Quality Committee concerning the Quality Monitoring might not look very "attractive" in comparison of the academic and technical substance of the project. Therefore, both the Quality Plan and its Management have to be the "silent companion" of the project in its implementation and achievements. But it also plays a significant part (a very positive one) in identifying problems to allow the PMT to sort them out.

It does not act as a *supervisor*, and it should not play that part. It is an ally discreet for the benefit of the project but fit for the purpose of a bigger and more important objective, a shared objective: the achievement of the goals of the project.

### 3. Approach and Tools for the Quality Plan

There will be the “sequential approach” to Quality management and monitoring mentioned before, which will be the main feature of the quality approach in the Vita GLOBAL Project. Such approach ensures the Quality Committee to verify the correct deployment of the actions associated to each WP according to the timeline.

Any deviation to the plan that might occur, could be easily identify in due time allowing the team to introduce the necessary corrective measure needed.

This approach not only focuses on the possibility of raising warnings and alarms in case of delays or cases of non-compliance in terms of deliverables and deadlines. This approach focuses above all on a *shared concept of responsibility* among the partners towards the general objectives and achievements, beyond the idea of “correction of non-compliances”.

Therefore, the quality concept of the project leads to the notion of *sustainability of the project* in terms of reinforcing the team work and the engagement among partners in the implementation of the various parts stages of the project and its objectives in the foreseen timeline.

The quality plan of the project is designed to monitor progress of the project deliverables and to ensure that the outputs of the project are pertinent and relevant to all partners and will have a sustainable impact on the education and research they provide/conduct. The quality plan involves both an ‘internal’ monitoring and feedback mechanism (driven by the quality committee) as well as feedback from ‘outside’ the partnership (two differently oriented external evaluations).

The committee will also develop **quality monitoring tools**, namely:

- A short and very practical manual for Quality management purposes and a brief list of performance indicators will be the main tools to set up an efficient Quality plan to approach the deployment of the project (embodied in this document).
- Verbal reports (every 3-4 months) of the QC to the Project Team Management (PMT), notably from the WP leads.
- Online and physical partnership meetings, as a monitoring mechanism for participation and the progress on deliverables
- Annual partnerships surveys (see Annex)

The committee will use the Log Frame as a basis, and develop the modes of assessing indicators further. It will also design a set of indicators that the External Project Evaluator should check, as well as the Terms of Reference for the external evaluation.

For internal project monitoring, the Quality Committee will collect the results of the partnership survey, launch new surveys where needed, analyse results and share them with the PMT, which will meet regularly to discuss the project progress. Trimestral reports will also be shared with the Steering Committee, at annual partnership meetings and virtually.

### ***Reporting, and enhancement***

The time-frame of the Project VitaGLOBAL is an important point of reference to be aligned to the particular progress of the different WPs and activities deployed in the Project. The quality tools should always be checked against the overall chronogram of the Project showing the start times and durations of the various WP to ensure a correct implementation.

This time frame will also allow bearing in mind the various "Interim Reports" which have to be "fed" with the achievements and outcomes derived from the different activities and deliverables reached and produced.

Each quality check can also act as a sort of a "self-evaluation report" of the WP on its progress against its stated aims and objectives. Rather than being 'open-ended' and potentially time consuming, partners should have a strong potential for each WP to self-evaluate its progress towards its Tasks and Deliverables underpinned by

the “fully achieved/partially achieved/further work required”, with the opportunity to provide summary evidence to support its self-evaluation outcome.

***What do the tools check?***

The monitoring tools should provide for commenting on

- Leadership (of the WP and the project)
- Continuous improvement (next steps to take and comments)
- Contribution of partners to Project Outcomes
- Engagement with other partners responsible for actions in the WP
- Impact
- Factors contributing to the WPs outcomes and (in particular) any enhancement opportunities

Since each WPs has its own implementation “rationale” throughout the Project where different “starting and completion dates” are combined, a short implementation account from each WP on continuous basis should be very useful in order to strengthen the coordination of the external quality assurance mechanisms of VitaGLOBAL. Such account/report could state explicitly the state-of-the-art of the development of the WP allowing delays or incidents to be identified and explained accordingly. This can be done verbally in Partnership Meetings and also via the partnership surveys.

Clearly, should there be any significant problem at an interim reporting stage then this will need to be identified and, in the first instance it will be for the WP to implement any remedial actions required to bring the WP back ‘on track’.

Whilst the Quality Management Plan does not envisage any major problems within the Project, should any significant or potentially significant problem arise outside of the normal Reporting cycle it is the responsibility of the WP to bring this to attention –returning it to the PMT who will report OBREAL/GLOBAL and ANECA under WP5 to take the necessary account of the event.

***Monitoring meetings of the Steering Committee/ Partnership meetings***

In order to ensure that all partners are engaged in strategic decisions and to help monitor, a project 'Steering Committee' meeting will be organised at least twice annually, in conjunction with one of the pre-planned meetings or workshops and/or virtually. This will be composed of one designed contact point from each partner that has a leadership role in the institution (dean of agricultural science faculty), who has strategic insight on the project development/outputs with respect to his/her own institution.

The 'Steering Committee' members will be nominated by each Partner once the project is awarded and will be one of two representative attending the kick-off meeting. In the steering committee meetings, the PMT will present the state of play regarding project deliverables and also how the project quality indicators are being used. Feedback on WPs can then be sought via verbal reports. Should major strategic decisions regarding the project work plan need to be taken in between these meetings, the PMT will consult the Steering Committee virtually and/or via conference calls. The Steering Committee will also discuss the external evaluation reports, with an eye towards consolidating the sustainability strategy for the VitaGlobal network and developing further the joint programme.

#### 4. External evaluation

The external evaluator will work according to the terms of reference, developed by Quality Committee, and attend key project events in order to interview partners. An external evaluation report will be the result of this, which will be presented and discussed at a Steering Committee meeting in the final project year. This will have the added value of stimulating a discussion on the project impact and sustainability.

The number of interactions, deliverables and meetings among the academic and the administrative profiles, makes necessary to also distinguish between an external appraisal of the academic sphere on the one side and the administrative/international relations one. The external evaluator will look at both dimensions.

The QC will develop ToR for the external evaluator and ensure the evaluator has all necessary support.

#### ***External joint programme development/quality of modules assessment***

While the general external evaluation will target the overall project implementation, achieved of deliverables per work package, management efficiency and communications in the partnership, an additional, special external assessment will be conducted in the last project months to assess in particular the potential joint programmes development and the pilot of the modules/ the relevance of the modules to the sector.

The reason for this additional external assessment is that it requires specific expertise in the field of viticulture, a different competency than project management. This evaluation will be commissioned to an expert in the field with academic expertise and reputation, who can provide an external perspective on the academic quality of the modules developed. The expert will be subcontracted to provide input on the pilot reports, comment on the set-up of the joint programme and the sustainability as per the module content and unique contribution to the sector. OBREAL/GLOBAL and URV have already discussed this engagement in the preparation of the project proposal.

The evaluation will result in a follow-up report with concrete recommendations for implementing the joint programme once the project ends, sustaining the modules and continuing academic collaboration for local development in the viticulture sector.

## 5. Conclusion

In line with Bologna principles, the Quality Plan is designed around Self-assessment (“user oriented focus”), against the stated aims, objectives and anticipated outcomes, and with common tools to ensure effective and efficient comparability. The Plan anticipates an on-going and explicit commitment to ‘internal’ monitoring by each of the WPs in ways that are most appropriate to explicitly demonstrate their progress without additional administrative requirements.

The key challenge for a project like this from the viewpoint of its quality management is how to harmonise the necessary autonomous development of the different Work Packages, while maintaining the coordination of the activities involved, the deliverables to be produced throughout the timeframe defined. Definitely, it is a delicate balance between autonomy and coordination.

A second crucial challenge might be the risk that the high activity load of the project may imply that partners do not take enough time to reflect collectively on the overall quality of the project.

Therefore, the Quality Plan, as well as the documents derived from it, has to deal with this tension by means of designing templates and forms that can provide the people responsible for both Work Packages and activities with useful tools to check their activities towards the achievement of a particular task as well as the internal management group with the necessary feedback to monitor the progress of the project and the timely delivery of deliverables.

Finally, and as part of the overall Quality Plan, the external evaluator's role will play a relevant part in conducting a constructive evaluation "from outside", by working according to the terms of reference and attending key project events/interviewing partners.

Therefore, the triangulation of the two dimensions defined by the Quality Plan, (i) the internal approach on monitoring, evaluation and quality control, (ii) the external mechanism established, will provide VitaGLOBAL with a robust Quality Plan as well as a tool for enhancing the Project's outcomes and expectations.

The Quality Plan is a working document that could be reviewed throughout the whole duration of the project whenever the partners consider it necessary.

## ANNEX I: Examples of questions for the Partnerships surveys

### ***Quality system implemented during the project***

#### INTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of this section is to provide partners with tools for internal evaluation of project activities, partnership and results that will assist and assist partners in monitoring and evaluating all phases of the project.

#### CONTENT OF THE ACTIVITY REPORT:

- Partner
- Reporting period
- Date
- Contact person

#### ***a. Main activities carried out during the period***

Please summarize the main activities carried out by your organization during the reporting period. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project tasks for which your organisation is responsible and the resources allocated to these activities in the table below.

Nr	WP	Activity	End date	% of completion
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#### ***b. Results / deliverables and work plan***

Please list the results of the activities that took place during the reporting period.

Please indicate if any updates have been made to the project work plan. In case of deviation from the work plan, please indicate the activities/results concerned, the delay and the corrective measures taken to improve the situation.

#### ***c. Dissemination and valorisation***

Please indicate the type of dissemination / valorisation activities carried out by the partner during the reference period.

#### ***d. Evaluation of the partnership***

This section provides a template for evaluating the partnership: the communication dynamics and the general approach for project management.

**QUALITY INDICATORS:**

- The partners are sufficiently involved in the project.
- Problems are dealt with and resolved quickly.
- The project meets the defined expectations.
- The quality process is satisfactory.
- The project management process is satisfactory.
- The information provided on the status, problems and progress of the project is satisfactory.
- The coordinator responds satisfactorily to communication, organisational and general structural problems.

**CONTENT OF THE PARTNERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE:**

Question	3 – Very satisfied	2 - Satisfied	1 – Not satisfied	NA
Are you satisfied that the deliverable dates are being met / will be met in accordance with the project plan?				
Are you satisfied with your organization's level of involvement?				
Are you satisfied with the level of involvement of other partners?				
Were the problems encountered resolved and dealt with quickly?				
What is your overall level of satisfaction with the project's ability to meet the defined expectations?				
Are you satisfied with the quality process used during the project?				
What is your overall level of satisfaction with the project management process?				
Overall, are you satisfied with the amount of information you received during the project regarding status, problems and progress?				
<b>Open Questions:</b>				

What communication, organisational and general structural problems were encountered and how could the project coordinator have done better in these areas?	
Do you have any further questions or comments?	

***e. Evaluation of internal project meetings and events***

In order to ensure that the internal meetings of the project are conducted satisfactorily and that the objectives are achieved, a questionnaire will be sent to all participants after each meeting. The results will be analyzed and a list of recommendations based on these results will be developed to improve future meetings. Below is a list of quality indicators and an example of the content of the questionnaire:

- Sufficient and appropriate information was sent to the partners in advance of the meeting.
- Communication before the meeting was effective.
- Partners had time for introductions (or reintroductions) and time to inform each other of their background and what they could bring to the project.
- The agenda was followed and any changes were negotiated and agreed with the partners.
- All partners contributed to the meeting.
- The objectives of the meeting were clear from the beginning and were achieved at the end.
- The working environment was adequate for the meeting.
- The planned activities have taken place.
- Partners have a clear idea of their role in the project and the next steps to follow.
- Accommodation, food and social aspects were satisfactory.

<b>Questionnaire</b>	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> version</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> version</b>
1. Was the information provided before the meeting sufficient and appropriate?	1. Was the information provided before the meeting sufficient and appropriate?
2. Have the objectives of the meeting been clearly stated?	
3. Has the meeting agenda been respected?	2. Has the meeting agenda been respected?
4. How would you rate the quality of the presentations?	4. How would you rate the quality of the presentations?
5. Did the interventions and the debate seem relevant to you? Did they meet your expectations?	5. Did the interventions and the debate seem relevant to you?  6. Have your training expectations been met?
6. Were the objectives of the meeting achieved?	
7. To what extent did the decision-making process take into account the views of all partners?	
8. Do you consider that there is a clear and reasonable timetable for future activities to be undertaken?	
9. How satisfied are you with the timing and duration of the meeting?	3. Was the duration of the training sufficient?
10. How would you rate time management?	7. How would you rate time management?
11. Were the room, visuals, materials, and documents available adequate?	8. Were the room, visuals, materials, and documents available adequate?
12. How satisfied are you with the meals (lunch, coffee breaks)?	9. How satisfied are you with the meals (lunch, coffee breaks)?
13. Do you have any additional comments?	10. Do you have any additional comments?
14. What are your suggestions for improving future meetings?	11. What are your suggestions for improving future meetings?

