

## Quality Assurance Plan

### “INTERnationalization at Home: Embedding Approaches and Structures to Foster Internationalization at Western Balkans / INTERBA”

Project reference No.: 610429-EPP-1-2019-1-AL-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

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## Abbreviations

EACEA - Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

IaH - Internalization at Home

HEI – Higher Education Institution

INTERBA – Project Title

WP – Work Package

QA(P) – Quality Assurance (Plan)

## Document information

<b>Project Acronym:</b>	<b>INTERBA</b>
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<b>Lead Organisation</b>	P5 – CESIE
<b>Dissemination level</b>	Institutional level

## History

Version	Date	Submitted by	Reviewed by	Notes
<b>V1</b>	24/04/2020	CESIE		1 <sup>st</sup> draft to be shared
<b>V2</b>	19/06/2020	CESIE	CESIE	2 <sup>nd</sup> draft
<b>V3</b>	31/07/2020	CESIE	All partners	Final draft

## I. INTRODUCTION

The present Quality Assurance Plan aims to provide a set of guidelines and procedures for internal use to ensure the overall quality and the progress of the project activities and an efficient project management.

The overall quality management of the INTERBA project is a transversal activity and will be conducted by CESIE in close cooperation with the coordinator and WP Leaders throughout the full duration of the project. **The main objective of INTERBA's Quality Assurance Plan** is to ensure a successful achievement of the project objectives with the best possible quality. The quality management will support the project management and contribute to preventing, minimising and containing issues and risks that might occur during project implementation. This will be done by monitoring and evaluating:

1. The progress of the activities against project work plan and timeline;
2. The Quality of the project outputs and activities;
3. The Performance of the consortium, including communication and cooperation.

The present document describes the procedures for ensuring appropriate quality of work and documentation in the project, including development of project documentation consistent with the general project concept, methods and tools employed to implement the work plan.

Thus, this document is meant to be a tool to support the consortium for successfully carrying out project activities. It provides an overview of the project contents, the partnership and roles of partners and of the Work packages and related activities. The plan is meant to be a basic document, which will be accompanied by other documents and quality assurance tools developed during the project.

The plan is developed in line with the project Grant Agreement and the administrative and financial guidelines for Erasmus+ Programme-funded projects.

### **The QA plan is structured as follows:**

- Chapter 2 summarises the project's objectives, its methodology and work plan, as well as the consortium, partners' roles, tasks and responsibilities;
- Chapter 3 presents the Quality Assurance Approach, including qualitative and quantitative indicators and quality control of deliverables;
- Chapter 4 presents briefly External Evaluation;

- Chapter 5 provides a timeline for Quality Assurance activities.

## II. The INTERBA Project

INTERBA is a three-year European project funded by the Erasmus+ Programme Key Action 2 – Cooperation for Innovation and exchange of good practices – Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education. Its main objective is to strengthen the international, intercultural and global dimension via “Internationalisation at Home” (IaH) implementation at partner Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in order to enhance the quality of education and make a meaningful contribution to society.

**Specific Objectives** of the project are:

- To formulate a **coherent and detailed IaH concept** that could be mainstreamed into the partner HEIs Roadmaps following on from their specific exigencies;
- To level up the scope and viability of IaH activities implemented in partner HEIs;
- To **train an expert pool** capable of developing and integrating IaH into HEI environment;
- To **launch an online platform** as a tool for IaH implementation;
- To establish/modernize the existing structure/entities responsible for IaH at HEIs.

**Main activities** of the INTERBA project:

- **Perform Needs Analysis** at institutional, national and regional level and outline priority areas for internationalization;
- **Create a knowledge repository base and networks of knowledge experts** at institutional, national and regional level, including a coordination model for using existing resources;
- **Create training contents for members of expert networks**, including guidelines on how to prepare short training opportunities for delivering knowledge to others and guidelines for putting together **Request for Knowledge documents** submitted to the network of experts;
- Train core staff from all institutions in EU through Train the Trainers workshops and organize pilot training in all partner countries;
- **Create Moodle structures** for the delivery of e-learning.

Principle **outputs** include:

- Needs Analysis on existing knowledge capital and gaps, defining prioritization of internationalization areas (Lead – P7, Universum College);
- Knowledge repository (Lead - P4, University of Cagliari);
- Network of knowledge experts and coordination model to bring together knowledge cases to knowledge gaps (Lead - P4, University of Cagliari);
- Training content for capacity building in internationalization (Lead - P2, Middlesex University);
- Training toolkit (materials, training portfolio and list of trained and re-trained academics) (Lead - P2, Middlesex University);
- E-learning platform for delivery, support and exchange of existing and new knowledge capital (Lead - P6, European University of Tirana).

### INTERBA Partnership

The INTERBA partnership is composed of ten partners from six countries – three Partner countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo) and three Programme countries (United Kingdom, Italy and Germany).

Partnership and roles of partners:

No. of partner	Role	Name	Country
P1	Coordinator, Leader WP 9 (Management)	University of Tirana	Albania
P2	Leader WP 3+4 (Training content and Piloting of Training)	Middlesex University	United Kingdom
P3	Leader WP 6 (Sustainability)	Hamburg University of Technology	Germany
P4	Leader WP 2 (Knowledge repository)	University of Cagliari	Italy
P5	Leader WP 7 (Quality Assurance)	CESIE	Italy
P6	Leader WP 5+8 (Moodle Platform and Dissemination)	European University of Tirana	Albania

<b>P7</b>	Leader WP 1 (Needs Analysis)	Universum College	Kosovo
<b>P8</b>	Partner	University of Pristina	Kosovo
<b>P9</b>	Partner	University of Tuzla	Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>P10</b>	Partner	Dzermal Bijedic University of Mostar	Bosnia and Herzegovina



## Management Structure of INTERBA project

INTERBA Management structure is composed by the “Coordinator” represented by Tirana University, who is the contractual party for the project with reference n° 610429 – EPP-1-2019-1-AL-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP concluded with the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA); responsible for the overall project management, aiming to ensure the activities and deliverables are duly performed under high quality standards.

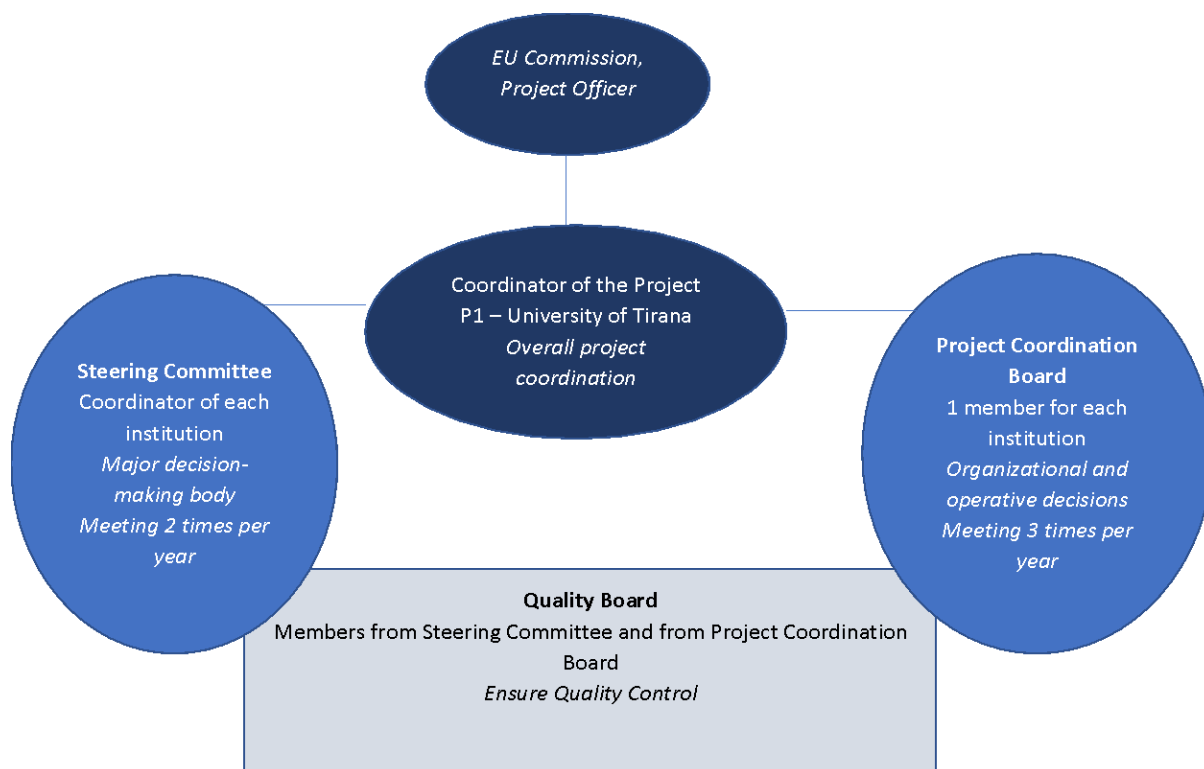


Fig. 1 Management Structure of the INTERBA project

In addition, each WP has appointed one partner to lead and manage the tasks implemented under the WP. Partners report to the WP Leader regarding completion of tasks while the Leader reports on the completion of each WP and its deliverables and outcomes to the coordinator.

The **Project Coordinator** supports the WP Leaders in achieving their tasks and, in particular, ensures that:

- The WP working plan and its implementation meet the project objectives and requirements of EACEA;

- The resources and capacities of the partnership are adequate to the planned activities;
- There is certain homogeneity among all working documents of the project regarding minimum quality standards.
- The Coordinator is responsible for the sum of all tasks implemented as a part of each WP.

Responsibilities of the **WP Leader** include:

- Designing the working plan and working methodology of the WP according to the project and WP objectives;
- Explaining the tasks and expected results of WP to all partners;
- Providing clarifications in response to doubts and supporting partners in the implementation of the plan;
- Ensuring the fulfillment of deliveries according to the set timeline;
- Collecting the work and results produced by the partners;
- Ensuring that each partner's contribution corresponds to the working plan and meets the necessary quality criteria;
- Developing and delivering the final product(s) of the WP.

Responsibilities of the **Partners** include:

All partners ensure the necessary personnel resources and assets as well as their organisational efficiency and logistics required to complete the appropriate implementation of the project activities.

The responsibilities and tasks of staff involved in the project are set by the person authorised to make decisions on behalf of the project coordinator and partners, respectively, in accordance with internal rules applicable in the coordinators and partners' institutions. The Project coordinator and partners, respectively, will set up project teams in their organisations to perform project tasks.

In particular, each partner will appoint a member for the Steering Committee (which is the major decision-making body) and a member for the Project Coordination Board (responsible for operative and operational issues). Members of these boards form together the Quality Board.

## Project structure and Work Packages

The INTERBA project is structured in 9 Work Packages. The graphic below illustrates the structure of the project and how the different Work Packages relate to each other.

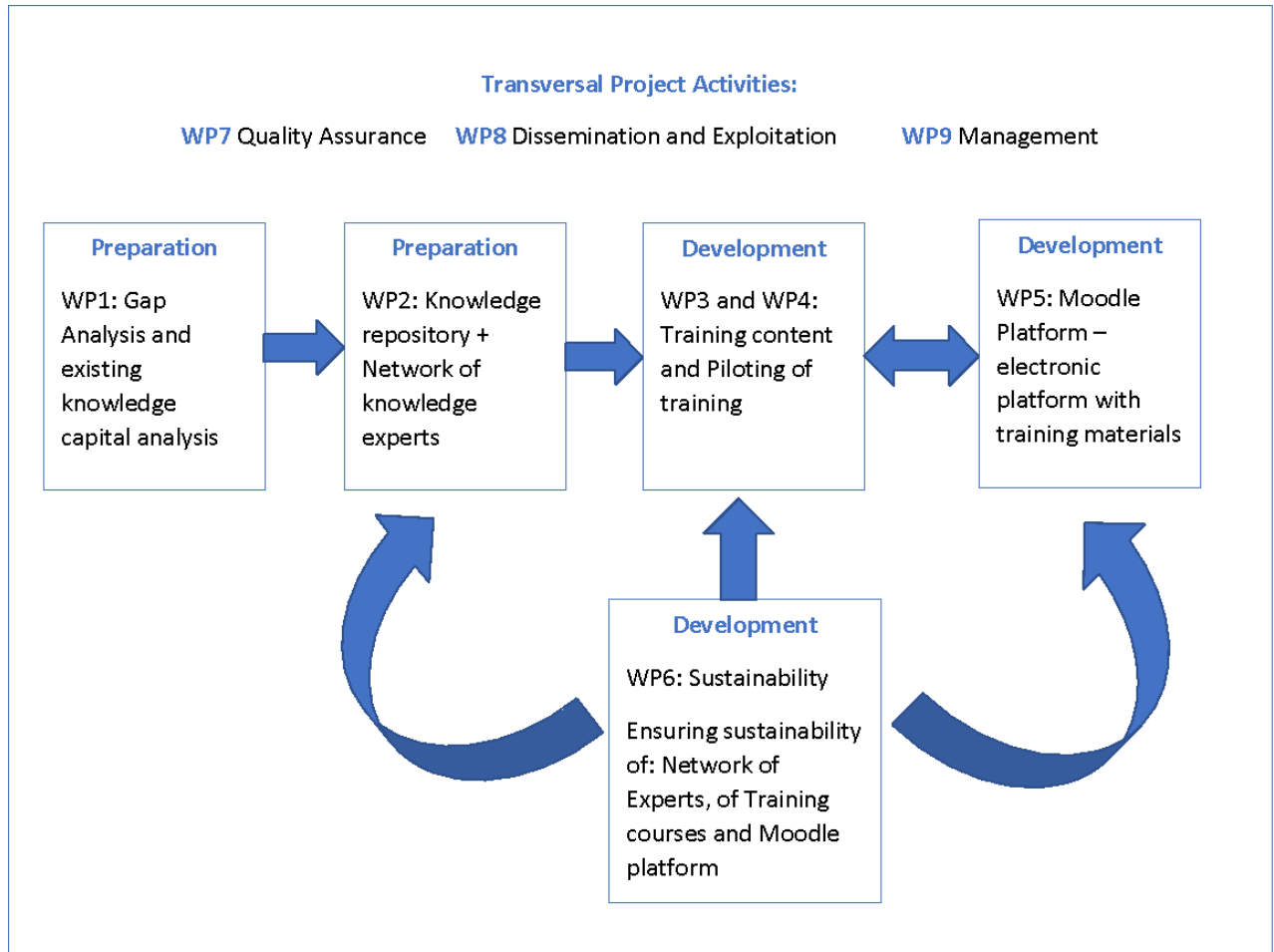


Fig. 2 Project Structure

More in detail, the various Work Packages are linked to each other as follows:

**WP1** prepares the ground for the following Work Packages by analysing existing knowledge capital and carrying out a needs analysis. **WP2** will then see the set-up of a Knowledge repository, the suggestion for a coordination model for use of existing resources and the establishment of a Network of knowledge experts.

**WP3** will prepare training contents, which will then be used in **WP4** for the delivery of training to different target groups. **WP5**, which foresees the development of a Moodle platform, will see the

introduction and translation of training materials, and the electronic platform will also be used for training and re-training (activities that are part of **WP4**).

**WP6** will ensure the sustainability of main project results developed in WP2-5, i.e. particularly of the Network Experts, of the Training courses and the Moodle Platform.

Finally, three **transversal WPs** accompany all project activities throughout the whole project duration: **WP7** Quality Assurance will monitor and evaluate all project activities and results; **WP8** Dissemination and Exploitation will ensure effective external communication and dissemination activities; **WP9** Project Management will provide overall project management and coordination, including internal and external reporting and financial management.

### III. Quality Assurance Approach

CESIE's Quality Assurance will ensure both monitoring and evaluation of INTERBA's project activities. Monitoring goes together with implementation, checking whether the project is carried out according to plan; it will be done continuously to observe what is going on in the project. Evaluation will look deeper and assess what has worked well and what has not worked well; it will be done at specific points of time during the project in order to provide partners with an overall picture and develop recommendations for possible improvements. These are ongoing activities which description is presented in the QA plan. The QA plan will be updated regularly during the all life span of the project.

The general evaluation criteria applied in the project are the following:

- **Relevance:** How relevant are the project activities and outputs for the participating institutions?
- **Effectiveness:** Are the objectives being achieved? How big is the effectiveness of the project compared to the objectives planned (Comparison: result – planning)?
- **Efficiency:** How pertinent were the management aspects and the project processes to reach the objectives?
- **Impact:** What is the impact or effect of the project activities and its outputs – on participating universities, stakeholders etc.?
- **Sustainability:** Are the positive effects or impacts sustainable? How is the sustainability or permanence of the project outcomes and outputs to be assessed?

Quality Assurance will avail itself with a variety of methods, depending on the various objects of evaluation and goals pursued:

- **Set goals and quality standards** for work packages: to do so, CESIE will prepare a table with an overview for all Work Packages, including goals, indicators and methods to measure achievement of indicators. The table will be shared with all partners, and each WP Leader will be asked to review and complete it with missing information. During project implementation the table will help to monitor the actual implementation of the activities and the achievement of the goals. Each year, CESIE will prepare an Annual Report providing the partnership with an overview of the progress and achievements in all WPs.
- **Monitoring of project progress:** at the beginning of the project, deadlines for the various project activities and results will be confirmed by WP leaders. The project coordinator, University of Tirana, will prepare an updated timeline (GANTT chart) with all set deadlines. Through questionnaires and interviews (via phone/videoconference and, if needed during on-site visits), CESIE will regularly check with WP leaders and partners the actual progress of the activities against the timeline.
- **Evaluating the performance of the consortium:** CESIE will regularly seek feedback from project partners, using written questionnaires (and, if needed, interviews/on-site visits), to evaluate various aspects, such as cooperation, internal communication, participation and satisfaction of partners.
- **Identify critical issues, potential risks and conflicts:** CESIE will prepare and distribute regularly questionnaires to all partners with specific questions on critical issues and potential risks they see. The partnership will be informed (through written reports) on the critical issues/risks identified. If needed, CESIE will beforehand inform the Coordinator in order to settle in time arising issues.
- **Make recommendations for changes and improvements:** CESIE will prepare reports on surveys, provide updates at partner meetings (both online and face-to-face) with suggestions for changes and improvements. Further, the Annual QA Reports will contain concrete recommendations for actions.

## Qualitative and Quantitative Indicators

All the results and activities of the INTERBA project will be analysed using a variety of indicators. Indicators are both quantitative and qualitative. They describe project's objectives in operationally measurable terms and will allow to measure performance, progress and impact of the project. For each Work Package, indicators will be defined, based on the application and on indications of WP leaders at the beginning of the project. The table below shows a preliminary set of indicators, which will be completed by the partnership in a shared document on [Google Drive](#).

Work Package / Milestones	Indicators	Means of verification
<b>WP 1 - Needs Analysis on existing knowledge capital and gaps, defining prioritization of internationalization areas</b>	No. of previous international projects and outputs analysed in all Partner Countries Needs analysis performed at institutional, national and regional level in the Partner countries Priority areas for internationalisation in each Partner Country HEI defined	Output: Needs Analysis Report
<b>WP 2 – Creation of knowledge repository and of Network of knowledge experts</b>	No. of knowledge cases in the repository (60 cases: 6/partners) No. of experts participating in the network (120 prs: 20/partners) Coordination model developed No. of Knowledge Requests submitted	Output: Knowledge repository Report from WP leader on participating experts in the Network and on submitted Knowledge Requests Output: Document on bridging model for knowledge cases
<b>WP 3 – Creation of training content on internationalisation</b>	Training content developed on skills necessary for knowledge sharing, training and capacity building. Guideline developed on Request for Knowledge documentation.	Output: Document with training contents and training materials Reports on short training courses Output: Guidelines for Request for Knowledge Documentation
<b>WP 4 – Delivery of training activities</b>	No. of staff trained (60: 6/partner) No. of staff participating in re-training sessions (600: 60/partner) Satisfaction of different categories of participants (core staff; other staff of Partner Country HEIs and staff of peripheral institutions) in the various training courses.	Signature sheets of training events Evaluation questionnaires submitted to participants after training Output: Training Toolkit

<b>WP 5 – Creation of e-learning platform</b>	No. of materials uploaded on the platform Key documentation translated in local languages (Albanian, Bosnian) No. of users of Moodle platform	Output: Moodle platform Insights into user numbers and activities of users on Moodle platform
<b>WP 6 – Elaboration of sustainability plans</b>	No. of sustainability plans elaborated in each Partner Country university No. of sustainability measures undertaken	Output: Sustainability Plans Output: Sustainability Reports (Interim and Final)
<b>WP 7 – Quality Assurance</b>	No. of evaluation questionnaires distributed to partners and filled in No. of internal and external QA reports: 3 Internal Annual QA Reports, 1 Internal Final QA Report; 2 External Interim Evaluation Reports, 1 External Final Evaluation Report QA tools provided to partners and used for internal QA processes Feedback provided by partners is turned into concrete recommendations for action	Evaluation questionnaires QA Reports Project meeting minutes
<b>WP 8 - Dissemination</b>	No. of accesses to the INTERBA website Quality of INTERBA website (attractive design; completeness of information; quality of language in which it is drafted; user-friendly) No. of followers and No. of interactions on INTERBA social media channels No. of participants at Dissemination events No. of published scientific papers and type of scientific papers (peer-reviewed?) No. of participants at Final International Project Conference No. of cooperation agreements between universities and enterprises	Activity log of website Screenshots of website Insights from social media channels Signature sheets from events Published papers Signature sheets International Project Conference Signed cooperation agreements

	No. of financial and institutional sustainability plans No. of relevant stakeholders reached by various dissemination activities No. of brochures printed and distributed	
<b>WP 9 - Management</b>	No. of Annual Reports on project activities: 3 No. of skype meetings No. of face-to-face consortium meetings	Output: Annual Reports (Narrative and Financial) Meeting Minutes (both from online and face-to-face meetings) Risk Management Reports

As it is presented in the table, for each indicator, the partnership defines Means of Verification, i.e. the source of data serving as “proof” for the indicator. CESIE as leader of WP Quality Assurance will coordinate the collection of data on indicators; depending on the means of verification, other partners will be involved in the collection of and data analysis. For example, in the case of WP 2, the lead partner of this WP will be responsible to collect information on the number of knowledge cases registered, and transmit this information to CESIE.

An exception from the above principle are the two other WPs dedicated to transversal activities, i.e. WP8 Dissemination and WP9 Management: they will independently collect data on the respective indicators. Thus, WP8 Leader (European University of Tirana) will be responsible for collecting proofs for all dissemination activities – they will, for example, collect proofs for website accesses and interactions in project social media etc. WP9 Leader (University of Tirana) will collect all proofs for management indicators, such as the number of reports provided by the partnership and the number of progress reports to the European Commission. University of Tirana as project coordinator will also be responsible for monitoring of budget execution and financial management and for carrying out risk management measures.

### Quality Control of Deliverables

Before submission, all Deliverables will go through a Quality Control process. The process for quality control of deliverables will include the following phases: 1) a draft is sent to the partners; 2) partners have 2 weeks to submit their comments; 3) the WP leader has one week to revise the deliverable and send the final version to the coordinator and CESIE, who will do a final check.

Coordinator (University of Tirana) is responsible for:



- Conducting the final review and proof-reading of deliverables;
- Ensuring the deliverables are submitted within the deadlines.

WP Leader is responsible for:

- Defining the methodology to be implemented within the WP;
- Leading and guiding other partners in performing the activities;
- Reviewing inputs received from partners;
- Composing and proof-reading the deliverable before sending it to the coordinator University of Tirana;
- Ensuring the delivery of the output within the deadline.

Partners (Quality Control Board) are responsible to:

- Performing the activities on time and ensuring their quality;
- Reviewing the final draft of deliverables.

Each deliverable will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Content – all deliverables will be checked taking into account the following aspects:
  - a) **Completeness** – the information provided in deliverables shall be complete, covering all contents foreseen in the Application and in the planning documents of the WP.
  - b) **Clarity** – the information provided shall be clearly structured and written in a comprehensible way.
  - c) **Language check** – before submission, each deliverable shall be proofread for linguistic errors.
- Appearance and Structure – all deliverables should have a uniform appearance, structure and referencing scheme. European University of Tirana, WP Leader of Dissemination, shall provide respective templates that comply with the EACEA guidelines for projects funded by the Erasmus+ programme.

## IV. External Evaluation

Further to the above described Internal Evaluation by CESIE also an External Evaluation will be carried out. The external evaluator will be appointed by the Project Coordinator, University of Tirana,

following a public call for proposals. The evaluator will support implementation of project activities by assessing its quality and providing recommendations and suggestions for improvement.

It is foreseen that the external evaluator will draft three evaluation reports; one after each year of implementation.

## V. Timeline of Quality Assurance Activities

WHAT	WHO	WHEN
Quality Assurance Plan	CESIE	31/03/2020
QA Annual Report 1	CESIE (main responsible) All partners contribute	14/10/2020
QA Annual Report 2	CESIE (main responsible) All partners contribute	14/10/2021
QA Annual Report 3	CESIE (main responsible) All partners contribute	14/10/2022
QA Final Report	CESIE (main responsible) All partners contribute	14/10/2022
QA tools	CESIE	Ongoing
External Evaluation Reports	External Evaluator (to be selected by University of Tirana)	14/10/2020 14/10/2021 14/10/2022