



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



New Master's Degree Curricula for Sustainable Bioeconomy in Uzbekistan (BioEcUz)

NO 619294-EPP-1-2020-1-LV-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN

Version 2.0, 15/12/2022

VERSION HISTORY

The Project Management and Quality Assurance Plan (further named QAP or Plan) was elaborated and delivered to the consortium members by the BioEcUz project coordinator – Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies (further named LLU or Coordinator). Management conditions, stipulated in a Partnership Agreement, signed between LLU and each partner, and quality assurance procedures have been included in the Plan, as well approaches identified as partners’ best project management practices.

The table below provides the actual version number, the author implementing the version, the date of the version, the name of the person approving the version, the date that version was approved, and a brief description of the reason for revision.

<i>Version No</i>	<i>Implemented By</i>	<i>Revision Date</i>	<i>Approved By</i>	<i>Approval Date</i>	<i>Reason for updating</i>
1.0	Irīna Kulitāne, LLU	30/04/2021 (creation date)	Yes, at the consortium meeting.	09/09/2021	x
2.0	Irīna Kulitāne, LLU - LBTU	15/12/2022	The coordinator	Partners informed at the MGT meeting	Updating information on results achieved and deliverables produced

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN	4
2.	MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES AND DECISION TAKING MODALITIES	4
3.	OBLIGATIONS OF THE COORDINATOR	5
4.	OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTNERS	5
5.	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING	6
6.	INTERNAL MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES	7
6.1.	COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND METHODS USED	7
6.2.	CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES	7
6.3.	DECISION MAKING PROCEDURES.....	7
7.	THE PROJECT QUALITY ASSURANCE DEFINITION, CRITERIA, AND INDICATORS.....	8
7.1.	QUALITY DEFINITION.....	8
7.2.	QUALITY MEASUREMENT CRITERIA.....	8
7.3.	INDICATORS USED FOR EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT QUALITY.....	8
7.3.1.	SUMMARY OF INDICATORS.....	8
7.3.2.	RESULTS AND DELIVERABLES TO BE PRODUCED AND THEIR ACHIEVEMENT/PRODUCTION TIMELINE	9
7.3.3.	RELEVANCE OF PRODUCED DELIVERABLES TO NEEDS OF stakeholders, THEIR APPLICABILITY..	10
7.3.4.	EVALUATION OF SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS AND DELIVERABLES.....	11
7.3.5.	EVALUATION OF MEASURES, ACHIEVED RESULTS	11
8.	QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESS.....	12

1. NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN

The Project Management and Quality Assessment Plan (further in this document named in abbreviation – MGT-QAP) is a document setting 1) project management procedures, agreed and stipulated in a Partnership Agreement, signed between LLU and each partner, and 2) quality assurance methodology, which includes procedures and criteria to be used for the assessment of the quality of the project implementation process and results achieved.

The plan refers to the project “New Master’s Degree Curricula for Sustainable Bioeconomy in Uzbekistan” (BioEcUz), No 619294-EPP-1-2020-1-LV-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP, being in implementation with financial support of EU Erasmus+ Programme.

The period of the Grant Agreement (further also used abbreviation – GA) covers time period 15/01/2021 till 14/01/2024, for which the partners apply and observe management procedures, set in this document. Quality requirements should be observed and applied by any of partners till full completion of obligations, set in the Grant Agreement, signed between LLU as a coordinator and EACEA as a funding authority, and it means – till end of a period of 5 (five) years starting from the date of payment of the balance by the funding authority to the Coordinator. The exact date will be known in spring 2024.

The MGT-QAP is elaborated specifically for the project and should be observed by the management team, as well other staff of any partner assigned to the project. MGT-QAP is subject for updating throughout the project period, if any of partners have proposed changes and partners have agreed on them.

2. MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES AND DECISION TAKING MODALITIES

- The Project Management Team (hereinafter referred to as PMT) consisting of the Project Manager and Administrative Coordinators at partners’ institutions is established for administrative and financial management of the BioEcUz project .
- The Development Team (hereinafter referred to as DevTeam) consisting of Primary Content Coordinator, one person per each involved HEI responsible on content issues is established for development and implementation of content related tasks, deliverables to be produced and results to be achieved.
- The COORDINATOR is in charge in coordination of tasks to be implemented by Partners from European Union countries.

3. OBLIGATIONS OF THE COORDINATOR

The COORDINATOR shall take all the steps needed to manage properly and correctly the BioEcUz project in accordance with the GA and all its annexes, to conduct the work in accordance with the work programme and schedule set forth in the GA and Annex I Description of the action, to achieve the defined results, outputs and impact. In addition, the COORDINATOR shall:

- Provide to the PARTNERS the copy of the Grant Agreement and its annexes, and the Programme Guide, the letters and instructions received from the Executive Agency if they are at interest of the whole consortium and the Partner, templates and any other relevant document concerning the BioEcUz project implementation and management.
- Keep the PARTNERS informed on a regular basis about all relevant communication between the COORDINATOR and the EACEA.
- Inform the PARTNERS without any delay about all essential issues connected to the BioEcUz project implementation.
- Elaborate and submit to the EACEA reports and their annexes within the scope and deadlines stated in the Grant Agreement.
- Transfer funding to the PARTNERS in accordance with the conditions stated in the Partnership Agreement.
- Review reports submitted by the PARTNERS, approve them and transfer payments according to the conditions defined in the Partnership Agreement.
- Provide to the PARTNER guidance and advice for implementation of activities the PARTNER is in charge, as well to advice the PARTNERS in drafting reports, preparing procurements and subcontracting services, and any other actions leading towards fulfilment of the PARTNERS’ tasks and duties.

4. OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTNERS

The PARTNERS shall respect all rules and obligations set forth in the GA, its annexes and in the Partnership Agreement. In addition, the PARTNERS shall:

- Commit themselves to do everything in its power to conduct the activities as specified in the Annex I of the GA - Description of the action and foster implementation of the BioEcUz project.
- Support the COORDINATOR to fulfil its tasks according to the Grant Agreement in a timely manner.
- Ensure adequate and regular communication with the COORDINATOR; any communication shall be made in writing (except during direct meetings) and is deemed to have been made on the date when the sending party sends it.
- Provide the COORDINATOR without any delay with any information needed to draw up reports; to react to any request sent by the EACEA, and to provide any further information required by the COORDINATOR.
- Ensure that interaction with other PARTNERS takes place in a continuous and smooth way.
- Be responsible for the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the BioEcUz project.
- Ensure compliance of all activities and expenditure with Erasmus programme and national rules, including rules on public procurement, state aid, publicity, and equal opportunities.
- Organise procurements for awarding contracts and subcontracting necessary for implementation of the BioEcUz project , in accordance with the conditions defined in the Partnership Agreement.
- Inform the COORDINATOR immediately about any delay in the performance of the activities or any circumstance that could lead to a temporary or final discontinuation of the BioEcUz project.

- Inform the COORDINATOR about any change in personnel, tasks, or procedures of its project management team.

5. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

- For the implementation of the project and the costs incurred in terms of staff, travel and costs of stay the unit costs amounts defined in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide (version 2020) have to be applied. The document is available at: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/default/files/erasmus-plus-programme-guide-2020_en.pdf
- The PARTNER has to record thoroughly and to keep all the BioEcUz project documentation, inter alias management related documentation: original procurements' documentation, invoices, debit notes, receipts, bank statements and any other financial documents for every activity and item of expense and all documents proofing implementation of activities and production of deliverables: deliverables produced in favour of the PARTNER or with PARTNER'S participation, lists of participants and agendas of events, publications and informative materials, and other. of payment of the balance.
- The PARTNERS are fully liable for application of accounting system complying with the national laws and regulations and ensuring visibility and transparency of any BioEcUz project expense.
- The PARTNERS have to make available without any delay and in due course any documentation on the BioEcUz project finance and activities required by the EACEA and by the COORDINATOR.
- The reporting periods and deadlines for submission of the reports are the following:

The report	Starting date of the reporting period	End date of the reporting period	Deadline for submission of the reports
No.1 (6,5 months)	15/01/2021	31/07/2021	31/08/2021
No.2 (7 months)	01/08/2021	28/02/2022	31/03/2022
No.3 (7 months)	01/03/2022	30/09/2022	31/10/2022
No.4 (6 months)	01/10/2022	31/03/2023	30/04/2023
No.5 (6 months)	01/04/2023	30/09/2023	31/10/2023
No.6 (3,5 months)	01/10/2023	14/01/2024	31/01/2024

6. INTERNAL MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

6.1. COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND METHODS USED

- Joint presence and online meetings. Specific Zoom meeting room is set for the BioEcUz project working meetings.
- Exchange of information via e-mail list, elaborated and available in the GoogleDrive folder. Partners take responsibility for updating information on contact persons and e-mail addresses and information of other partners on updates done.
- GoogleDrive platform - documentation storage place is created and made available to the administrative coordinators and to the development team members.
- E-mail, WhatsApp, Zoom – tools for bilateral communication.
- Response to e-mails: 3 working days normally, 1 working day - in the urgent case.

6.2. CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

- Initially, the Partner having issue to solve should bring complaint to the Project Manager (PM), if issue is related to management process, and to Project Content Coordinator (PCC), if issue is related to the content. PM or PCC organize meetings (either presence or online) with conflicting parties (within 5 working days from date when informed). During the meeting conflict is discussed, decision made.
- If it is not possible to solve conflict otherwise, PM or PCC (accordingly to the issue) not later than within 15 working days organize a conflict resolution meeting of relevant team (PMT or development Team). Decision is made by voting after hearing involved parties.

6.3. DECISION MAKING PROCEDURES

- The Project Management Team has rights to take decision by simple/qualified majority of the each particular team (one vote per Partner).
- The Development Team has rights to take decision by simple/qualified majority of the each particular team (one vote per Partner).
- All made decisions will be fixed in writing. Minutes within 5 working days will be sent to all involved parties by e-mail, as well inserted in MGT document map in the Google Drive folder.
- In case the Coordinator has profound objections concerning the compliance of a decision taken related to the conditions of the Grant Agreement or the legal basis of the ERASMUS+ Programme, the decision shall be frozen until the Coordinator have clarified the matter with the EACEA. In case that no compliance should be asserted the decision will be cancelled.

7. THE PROJECT QUALITY ASSURANCE DEFINITION, CRITERIA, AND INDICATORS

7.1. QUALITY DEFINITION

Quality of the BioEcUz project means:

- Achievement of all planned results and production of all deliverables within the predefined time and budgetary restrictions, where the results and deliverables are acknowledged by stakeholders to whom they refer: involved universities, academic staff, students, and industries, represented by associations and companies.
- All processes, results and deliverables are properly documented.
- The funding authority (EACEA) approves all deliverables and spending.

7.2. QUALITY MEASUREMENT CRITERIA

There are 9 (nine) groups of quality measurement criteria, and they are as following:

1. Timely implementation of activities.
2. Achievement of planned results and production of deliverables according to the list and scope agreed in the Grant agreement.
3. Satisfaction of stakeholders with achieved results, where stakeholders are: involved UZ universities, academic staff, students, and industries, represented by associations.
4. Applicability of produced deliverables.
5. Sustainability of results and deliverables (overall and at the each partner level).
6. Sufficient visibility of the project and its results.
7. Eligibility of incurred costs, accepted by EACEA.
8. Approval of reports by EACEA.
9. Availability of documentation according to the conditions defined in Grant agreement and Partnership agreement.

7.3. INDICATORS USED FOR EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT QUALITY

7.3.1. SUMMARY OF INDICATORS

Indicators of results and progress of the BioEcUz project are:

- New curricula developed and approved by relevant national authorities.
- Number of study visits organised, teachers participated, impact of the visits on teachers’ capacity and new joint initiatives among UZ and EU HEIs.
- Number of teachers trained, their professional benefits, impact on teachers’ capacity and study quality.
- Number of students trained, students’ evaluation of study content, teaching methods used, available study resources (literature, laboratories).
- Number of HEIs, where curricula quality assurance methodology is introduced, assessment is provided.
- Number of sets of equipment acquired, feedback of teachers and students on new facilities impact on study process quality.
- Number of tripartite events organised, number of target groups’ representatives participated, recommendations received.
- Number of dissemination and exploitation measures held, number of target groups’ representatives addressed.
- Long term impact measurement indicator - appreciation of the studies in the new curricula (by students).

7.3.2. RESULTS AND DELIVERABLES TO BE PRODUCED AND THEIR ACHIEVEMENT/PRODUCTION TIMELINE

Evaluation is done once at the each six -seven months period – while elaboration of the interim reports and is carried out by the project manager. Production fact is stated by inserting actual month of delivery. If not produced timely, reasons and indicative production date are described in column "Remarks". The month of production of deliverables, which have to be produced periodically (for example, articles), is stated at the respective production time.

WP and No of result, deliverable	Title of result, deliverable	Planned date and month when should be produced	Actual month of delivery	Remarks
WP1, D1.1.	The joint analysis report	30/04/2021	30/04/2021	Approved at the MGT meeting on 02.06.2021.
WP2, D2.1.	New bioeconomy related master curricula (120 ECTS) licence	15/06/2022	15/06/2022 09/09/2022	15/06/2022 – quotas assigned 09/09/2022 – speciality included in the classifier.
WP2, D2.2.	Set of new bioeconomy related master curricula documentation and materials	30/08/2022	30/08/2022	Fully completed.
WP3, D3.1.	6 study visits held, 18 UZ HEIs teachers and 3 representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture participated in the each visit	15/06/2022	3 study visits till 18/09/2022	Till the end of the reporting period 3 study visits have been held. Two others will be organised in 2023.
WP3, D3.2.	Teaching capacities improved – 3 video conference classes developed; scientific data base licences acquired for each involved UZ HEI	15/12/2021	30/09/2022	Equipment purchased for 4 UZ HEIs. Licences will be not acquired.
WP4, D4.1.	Pilot studies provided, at least 24 students participated	31/12/2023	Ongoing	14 students admitted, pilot studies in amount of 12,2 ECTS provided till end of the reporting period.
WP4, D4.2.	3 master classes provided	31/12/2023	Foreseen	Will be held starting from January 2023.
WP5, D5.1.	MSP quality assurance methodology (QAM)	15/10/2021	12/05/2022	Fully completed. Approved at all involved UZ HEIs.
WP5, D5.2.	External expert assessment of the project progress, quality, results applicability	10/06/2022; 10/01/2024	Mid-term - 08/12/2022	Mid-term evaluation done; report elaborated.
WP5, D5.3.	The results sustainability plan	15/01/2022 the first edition; 10/01/2024 – updated edition	1 st edition - 14/09/2022	1 st edition elaborated.
WP6, D6.1.	The website	15/01/2024	31/05/2021	Located on the platform of P2 TSAU.
WP6, D6.2.	12 TV and radio broadcasts	15/11/2023	In progress	9 TV and radio broadcasts till 14/10/2022.
WP6, D6.3.	36 publications	10/01/2024	In progress	64 publications till 14/10/2022.

WP6, D6.4.	2 joint academic-industry-public authorities' bioeconomy forums organised, at least 100 participants participated	30/11/2021; 15/11/2023	1 st Forum held on 27-28/04/2022	2 nd Forum will be held on 2-3 May 2023.
WP7, D7.1.	Reports	14/12/2022; 14/03/2024	13/12/2022	Progress report submitted

7.3.3. RELEVANCE OF PRODUCED DELIVERABLES TO NEEDS OF STAKEHOLDERS, THEIR APPLICABILITY

Quality of deliverables and measures related to content, produced results and deliverables, their applicability and management are measured by obtaining opinion of the project stakeholders, which are defined as following:

- Academic staff of the involved Central Asia universities
- Academic staff of European Union universities
- Students
- Industries (associations and SMEs) of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan
- Project partners (with regard to management and communication)

Methods of measurement: questionnaires (Q), interviews (In), reports (R).

Activities and deliverables to be evaluated:

WP, No of activity or No of result/deliverable	Activity/result/deliverable to be measured with regard to quality (grouped)	Method/tool used for measuring	Stakeholder's group addressed to measure activity/result/deliverable				
			All partners	Academic staff of UZ universities	Academic staff of EU universities	Students	Industries (associations)
WP1, 1.1.	The joint analysis report	R	X	X	X	-	X
WP2, D2.1.	New bioeconomy related master curricula (120 ECTS) licence	R	-	X	X		
WP2, D2.2.	Set of new bioeconomy related master curricula documentation and materials	R, Q	X	X	X	X	-
WP3, D3.1.	6 study visits held, 18 UZ HEIs teachers and 3 representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture participated in the each visit	R, Q, In	-	X	X	-	-
WP3, D3.2.	Teaching capacities improved – 3 video conference classes developed; scientific data base licences acquired for each involved UZ HEI	Q, In	-	X	-	X	-
WP4, D4.1.	Pilot studies provided, at least 24 students participated	R, Q, In	X	X	X	X	-
WP4, D4.2.	3 master classes provided	Q, In	X	X	X	X	-

WP5, D5.1.	MSP quality assurance methodology (QAM)	R	x	-	-	-	-
WP5, D5.2.	External expert assessment of the project progress, quality, results applicability	R	x	x	x	x	-
WP5, D5.3.	The results sustainability plan	R	x	-	-	-	-
WP6, D6.1.	The website	R	x	-	-	-	-
WP6, D6.2.	12 TV and radio broadcasts	R	x	-	-	-	-
WP6, D6.3.	36 publications	R, Q	x	-	-	-	-
WP6, D6.4.	2 joint academic-industry-public authorities' bioeconomy forums organised, at least 100 participants participated	R, Q	x	x	-	x	x
WP7, D7.1.	Reports	R	x	-	-	-	-

7.3.4. EVALUATION OF SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS AND DELIVERABLES

Sustainability of results and deliverables will be measured by analysing information provided by partners in interim reports. When necessary to acquire additional information or to get evidence on probability of proposed solutions, the Coordinator will organise individual interviews. Results will be summarised and included in the Technical Implementation Report and Final Report.

7.3.5. EVALUATION OF MEASURES AND ACHIEVED RESULTS RELATED TO VISIBILITY AND DISSEMINATION

Sufficient visibility of the project and its results means:

- 1) Production and availability of all dissemination materials as they are defined in the GA.
- 2) Number of stakeholders reached through dissemination measures.
Information source for measuring – number of produced materials and achieved stakeholders, accounted from reports elaborated and submitted by partners.
- 3) Impact of measures held on awareness of stakeholders. Will be measured by provision of questionnaires among SMEs and students.

7.3.6. RELEVANCE OF WORK DONE AND SPENDING TO GRANT AGREEMENT CONDITIONS

Relevance of work and spending to grant agreement conditions means:

- 1) Incurred costs are accepted by the EACEA eligible.
- 2) Activity report is approved and no one activity, result, deliverable is refused, because of its quality.
- 3) Documentation proofing provision of activities and spending is elaborated, filed and kept according to conditions defined in the Grant agreement and in Partnership agreements.

8. QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

Quality will be assessed:

1. *For single activities and deliverables*, as described in section 3.3.1 of this document. It will be done by relevant partners, which are involved or benefiting from activity/deliverable. Coordinators at each partner level will summarize feedback, information provided by stakeholders, will develop (in written) and submit to the consortium suggestions, what and why has to be improved. During the partners’ meeting the consortium takes a decision on whom and how has to implement improvements.
2. *As interim assessment*, where information provided by single partners is analyzed and merged into joint conclusions and suggestions. It will be done by the staff of LLU, acting as the lead partner of the project. If the lead partner identifies any necessary improvements or threats affecting quality, it will develop (in written) and submit to the specific partner (if refers to one partner) or to consortium suggestions, what and why has to be improved. During the partners’ meeting the consortium takes a decision on whom and how has to implement improvements related to the whole partnership.