

# AQUA-TNET Workpackage 5: Innovation in Teaching

*Meeting 19<sup>th</sup> September 2008, Krakow*

## Notes on Workpackage 5 core group meeting:



**Attending** – John Bostock, Jean Dhont, Jaume Fernández-Borràs, Mike Moulton and Bernd Ueberschaer. Apologies were received from, Juhani Pirhonen, Stefan Oli Steingrimsson, and Bent Rønsholdt.

John Bostock opened the meeting with a short introduction to the agenda and tasks for the meeting.

### ***Completion of WP5 deliverables:***

*Report on innovation in teaching* – It was agreed that this report is complete. Only minor edits have been made since it was first published. Leaving it as a Google document provides the greatest flexibility with respect to any further development, and keeps the web links live. Jean Dhont agreed to check if it would be possible to link to the report from the WP5 menu buttons in addition to a link from the WP pages. The report can easily be saved and printed as a PDF document, although the native format is HTML, which does not give the greatest control over formatting. It was agreed that John Bostock should check with the project administrators to see if a hard copy format is required for delivery to the European Commission. If so, it would be worth downloading the report into MS Word format and tidying pagination and table of contents etc. The formatted report (converted to PDF) could also be used in any other project dissemination activities. John Bostock agreed to check with the project managers if there were any special considerations with respect to EC regulations and copyright.

*Guide to finding, using and sharing teaching materials on the net* – Significant progress has been made on this since the Madrid meeting and a framework is now live on the AquaTNET website with content in several sections. However, it was felt that it would be not possible to complete all the envisaged sections within the timescale of the current project, at least at the quality desired for the project. It was noted that strengthening guidance and support to AquaTNET members for adopting ICT tools and collaborative approaches is part of the remit for the new project. John Bostock should therefore discuss with the project managers a reasonable point for passing the work from one project to the next. If possible, the assessment of needs, design and implementation of the web guide should be the deliverable for the current project, with further content a deliverable for the next project. It was also noted that this task was substituted in place of a database of teaching resources, which WP1 reported having started in the morning session (although it is just a short list of links at present). It might be investigated whether the WP1 initiative would cover the original WP5 deliverable.

Further development was discussed with Jaume offering to develop a section on self assessment and testing and Bernd advisements on the suitability of videos for innovative

teaching and how to produce respective videos. It was also suggested that each section should have a facility for user feedback, perhaps with ratings – to help with future development. This led to discussion as to whether the guide might be further developed as a collaborative wiki. It was felt this could be examined in more detail under the next project. A further issue might be whether a multi language version could be implemented and how it might be developed and supported.

### ***Feedback from stakeholders***

There was some discussion after the WP5 presentation in the morning plenary session. Whilst the outputs from the group were generally well received, there was some concern expressed that the group were focusing mainly on computer-based tools rather than a wider and more critical focus on enhancing learning. In part this may have been due to presenting the guide and video lectures without providing full context. However, it was agreed that the suggested tools can help increase the motivation to learn, which is the key to success. For instance, the main attraction in many of these tools is due to growing interest in distance (mainly Internet-based) learning. It was suggested, whenever feasible, to allocate financial resources for the compilation of such materials in order to be able to hire professional support to help produce the most effective teaching tools.

### ***Planned activities for AquaTNET-2***

The group reviewed the main tasks planned for the new AquaTNET project. These were grouped into four areas of activity:

- Network member & stakeholder surveys & consultation
- Development of innovation case studies
- Exploration of learning communities and using ICT to link work and study
- Investigation of frameworks for sharing digital teaching materials and multidisciplinary collaboration tools

The tasks can also be grouped into three main themes:

#### *1) Evolving teaching methods*

- Carry out a survey of network members to characterise current teaching and assessment methods used, existing interactions with external stakeholders, and to detect trends and identify activity and interest in developing and implementing innovative approaches
- Work with stakeholder groups to identify means of improving teaching and assessment in the light of different stakeholder needs, especially where these are perceived to be changing
- Identify examples of innovative approaches for dissemination to the network membership

#### *2) Utilising new tools*

- Strengthen guidance and support for members to adopt new ICT tools for collaboration that also help improve quality of learning and widen access

- Investigate the potential for, and subsequently develop a framework to allow member institutions to swap or share new digital materials and develop joint course offerings
- Encourage, monitor and disseminate trials of ICT mediated learning – particularly the use of mobile devices and greater use of video and audio streaming or on-demand access.

### *3) Enhancing linkages and collaborations between teachers and learners*

- Linking with WP6, investigate models for re-using digital teaching materials and ICT mediated teaching effort for formal, non-formal and informal learning provision within the broader context of lifelong learning. In particular the potential for flexible e-learning communities where contributions from lifelong learners are encouraged, valued and integrated in ways that enhance the value for all learners
- Develop other ways of using ICT to link students with the workplace (both industry and research) to the benefit of all parties
- Outline ways of increasing interdisciplinary awareness and skills through collaborative exercises, case studies and simulations

There was insufficient time to develop more detailed plans for the new project activities, however, Bernd Ueberschaer suggested that extension of the present WP 5 core group with new members who may be able to advice specifically on the issue of multimedia science and online social and collaborative networks and applications would be a priority. Potential members should be invited to attend the kick-off meeting of AquaTNET-2.

### ***Other projects***

There was insufficient time to consider any additional project proposals. None of the group members were aware of any relevant calls.