QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Project Acronym:	BIOSINT
Project full title:	Strengthening capacities and digital competences in biomedical education through internationalization at home
Project No:	101082863-BIOSINT-ERASMUS-EDU-2022-CBHE
Funding Scheme:	ERASMUS+
Coordinator:	University of Kragujevac (UniKg)
Project start date:	16th January 2023
Project duration:	36 months

Abstract	The QMP outlines the main definitions related to quality management. It then defines processes for planning and executing the project activities in order to ensure the highest possible quality. The QMP sets the minimum principles, requirements and processes needed to implement an effective quality assurance and control. It also provides templates to be used.

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DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Title of Document:	Quality Management Plan
Work Package:	WP1 – Project Management and Quality Architecture
Last version date:	25.08.2023
Status :	Approved
Document Version:	v.01
File Name	BIOSINT Quality Management Plan.docx
Number of Pages	20
Dissemination Level	Internal (Institutional) - RESTRICTED

VERSIONING AND CONTRIBUTION HISTORY

Version	Date	Revision Description	Responsible Partner
v.01	19/06/2023	Creation of document	UniKg (Ljiljana Tasic)
v.01	18/07/2023	Review of document	UniKg (Dragan Milovanovic)
v.01	25/08/2023	Review of document	UniKg (Milan Zaric)
v.01	25/08/2023	Review of document	UniKg (Olivera Milovanovic)
v.01	31/08/2023	Approval of document	UniKg (Vladimir Jakovljevic)

DISCLAIMER

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ABBREVIATIONS

D	Deliverable
EACEA	Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency
EU	European Union
HEI	Higher Education Institution
LFM	Logical Framework Matrix
NEO	National Erasmus Office
BIOSINT	Strengthening capacities and digital competences in biomedical education through internationalization at home
QAPT	Quality Assurance Project Team
PCB	Project Consortium board
IaH	Internalization at Home
WP	Work package

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Quality Management Plan" (QMP) is a part of deliverable within WP1 entitled "Project management handbook" of the BIOSINT project ("Strengthening capacities and digital competences in biomedical education through internationalization at home"). The project task T1.4 "Development of project management and quality strategies" defines the goal to develop the quality control plan, including project processes, policies and the management quality manual as well as metrics for BIOSINT according to the practices and experiences of the successful projects. Together with other document strategies and plans, the QMP contributes to the project MS3 milestone, "Adopted project management strategies by PCB".

The QMP outlines the main definitions related to quality management. It then defines processes for planning and executing the project activities in order to ensure the highest possible quality. The QMP sets the minimum principles, requirements and processes needed to implement an effective quality assurance and control. It also provides nine templates as annexes of the Plan.

1. Introduction

The Quality Management Plan formalizes the approach that will be followed by the partners of the BIOSINT project to ensure the highest possible quality of the project activities, outputs and outcomes and project management.

The deliverable itself is produced based on clear responsibilities: the task / deliverable leader drafts the Plan, involves the WP leader and co-leaders and then the QAPT (Quality Assurance Project Team) of the project and obtains feedback from all partners. The WP leader then finalizes the Plan, which will be approved by the Executive Board (EB), firstly and, then, by the Project Consortium Board (PCB). The Plan is integral part of Project Management handbook that be adopted by the PCB. During the project implementation, WP leader will also monitor the implementation and acceptance of the quality procedures along with the QAPT team and support the coordinator in its reinforcement.

This Plan defines procedures for:
- Internal monitoring, quality and risk management,
- External monitoring, and
- Partners' technical and financial reporting.

The Plan defines also the quality expectations regarding the project deliverables, i.e. reports and documents, events/workshops/meetings as well as procedures for internal and external monitoring.

The structure of the deliverable is as follows:
- Chapter 2 defines the quality expectations of the consortium regarding the project as a whole, its deliverables, i.e. the documents, the project events such as workshops, meetings and other activities, the promotional materials, website and electronic tools and the project management as well as the general guidelines to be followed.
- Chapter 3 defines the internal monitoring strategy and outlines the responsibilities of the project partners as well as the core principles of the risk management strategy.
- Chapter 4 describes the external monitoring strategy.
- Chapter 5 focuses on the financial and technical reporting duties of the partners and finally the Annexes to the document provide templates (which are also available separately) to be used by the project partners.

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2. Quality Expectations

The present chapter presents the expectations of the project consortium with reference to the BIOSINT deliverables and activities as well as the expectations relevant to the project management.

2.1. Quality of the project implementation

The project aims to implement these action plans needed for establishment of Internalization at Home (IaH) in biomedical studies in West Balkan region, by providing necessary framework, procedure, platform and curricula. Project outcomes will contribute to accomplishment of Strategy's goals, such as widening access to HE education, and making HE more relevant and adaptable to the labour market.

The partners agree that this overall objective shall always be in the forefront of all decisions to be taken. The partners therefore might decide to prioritise certain activities over others which have a higher impact in relation to the achievement of the objectives.

Specific objectives of the project are:
- Create the State of the Art of IaH in European Union (EU) and Western Balkan (WB) biomedical higher education institutions (HEIs).
- Develop and implement of IaH strategies at WB biomedical HEIs.
- Develop and implement digital protocols and services for international students and staff.
- Introduce of intercultural and international competences through current courses and new virtual courses.
- Setting international digital teaching and learning environment for home students.
- Ensure successful development of the project's procedures of initiation, planning, execution, regulation and closure as well as the guidance of the project team's operations towards achieving all the agreed upon goals within the set scope, time, quality and budget standards.
- Identify and organise the activities to be performed in order to promote the commercial exploitation of the project's results and the widest dissemination of knowledge from the project.
- Demonstrating how internationalization at home has changed participants' attitudes, knowledge, or behaviour in the short term.

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2.2. Quality of project deliverables

The power of the project deliverables of BIOSINT project lies in their ambition and well-tailored design according to the characteristics and needs of each specific target group (teachers, students, manager, staff, stakeholder etc.). The project applies multiple communication and dissemination tools such as WS, training, info days, conferences, comprehensive and attractive printed materials, newsletters, Web portal, Web application, promotional material, TV appearances, brochure, press conference etc.

A common quality expectation for all deliverables is their relevance to reach the overall objective and the specific objectives, with a further focus on their development in an efficient and effective manner. Timely delivery following the project work plan as identified in the Application Form and Action plans (modified and agreed by the PCB on six-month basis) is expected.

2.2.1. Quality of document based deliverables

A consistent and common format for all document based deliverables (word document, power point presentations) is to be followed by all partners using templates provided within this Plan:

- Annex A - Memorandum documents (portrait, landscape)
- Annex B - Power Point Presentation Templates (standard, widescreen)
- Annex C - Event Attendance List Template
- Annex D - Event Evaluation Form Template
- Annex E - Event Report Minutes Template
- Annex F - Deliverable List and Review Form
- Annex G - Risk Monitoring Sheet Template
- Annex H - News Template
- Annex I - Internal QA and Monitoring Template
- Annex J - Internal Report Template

Three more templates are also provided for reviewers of deliverables where the second level of quality control is required (Annex F – Deliverable List and Review Form), template for risk management (Annex G – Risk Monitoring Sheet Template) and table for monitoring of full set of BIOSINT deliverables, their deadlines, dissemination levels, etc. (Annex F – Deliverable List and Review Form).

Those templates are adopted by the EB members in order to ensure a common appearance of deliverables as well as to ensure that a minimum amount of information will appear consistently in all documents produced by the project. This is not relevant to deliverables that by their nature need to have a different format (i.e. project brochures, newsletters).

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When partners produce studies and publications as deliverable, they are obliged to put flag of the European Union with sentence "*Co-funded by the European Union*" on the cover or the first page. Moreover, they must use following disclaimer on the inner pages: "Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them."

2.2.2. Quality of BIOSINT events

All events within the project should be organised professionally. The organizers should provide in due time a full information package to the participants including the draft agenda, letter of invitation and a note on the logistics (informing about travel arrangements, venue, suggested hotels, links to online video conferencing event etc.). Time for preparation activities depends on the type of event e.g. several months for conference and several weeks for training. This will be defined in separate action plans by task/WP leaders.

The meeting organizers ensure smooth registration processes (including list of attendees – Annex C) and the implementation of the meetings respecting appropriate time for event sessions and breaks as well as the availability of all necessary materials (e.g. training and promotional material). The organizers will also ensure the recording of minutes of the meetings or video recording of an online meeting in a concise style including a list of action points. Where appropriate (e.g. for training, seminars) also feedback forms will be distributed among participants (Annex D) and event reports related to feedback forms will be prepared by organisers (Annex E). Power Point presentations should be prepared using appropriate templates (Annex B).

Based on obligations of the beneficiaries defined in article 17 of the Grant agreement, related to information requirements, the partners shall inform the public, press and media (internet included) of the event which must acknowledge the EU support and display the European flag (emblem) and funding statement "Co-Funded by European Union". Posters, roll-up and other promotional materials shall be displayed during the event.

Each event will be documented by various materials as described in the table below.

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Table 1. Documentation of BIOSINT events

Type of Event	Materials	Available at	
		BIOSINT web-site	BIOSINT new platform
Info-days, workshops and seminar	News/Info	☒	☐
	Agenda	☒	☒
	List of participants*	☒	☒
	Report	☒	☒
	Gallery	☒	☒
	Presentations**	☒	☐
	All presentations	☐	☒
Kick-off, PCB meetings and Final Conference	News/Info	☒	☐
	Agenda	☒	☒
	List of participants*	☒	☒
	Minutes	☐	☒
	Gallery	☒	☒
	Presentations	☐	☒
Trainings	News/Info	☒	☐
	List of trainees*	☒	☒
	Training materials	☐	☒
	Report	☒	☒
	Gallery	☒	☒

* Name and affiliation will be visible; all personal data will be hidden
** Upon the approval of the presenter

2.2.3. Quality of promotional materials

Communication and dissemination activities of the project will adhere to the Dissemination and Exploitation Plan (WP5) of the project. All promotional materials will reflect the visual identity of the project and the Erasmus+ Programme.

The project coordinator (UniKg) is responsible for design of all promotional material. The draft version will be sent to all partners for comments and suggestions, before printing, publishing and distribution. The materials will be disseminated by all project partners at events which are relevant to reach the project's target group (i.e. not only events organized by the project itself, but also general events with a focus on research, technological development and innovation).

2.2.4. Quality of website and other electronic tools

The project envisages setting up the public BIOSINT website, new BIOSINT platform and other appropriate electronic tools (e.g. Google Drive) for project management. All representation tools will be continuously updated by the partners and are intended to effectively communicate the results of the project. For that purpose, partners will use Annex I – News template in order to deliver the news on organized or attended events along with necessary material for posting on the project website (agenda, list of attendees, photos and event report).

USH will be responsible for setting up and maintaining the BIOSINT web-site with all information and materials received from project partners. Moreover, all partners are asked to promote BIOSINT project on their websites and other electronic tools (such as: Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn profiles/groups, newsletters, etc.) by providing short description of the project, logo and link to BIOSINT website. The BIOSINT platform can be accessed by all partners depending on their assigned tasks and roles. It will be the single point of reference for the project documentation and communication among partners.

In addition, the project coordinator (UniKg) will be responsible for the reporting on project progress to the EU Funding & Tenders electronic Portal Continuous Reporting tool [©European Communities - Version 15.0.5, Grant Management Services - Project Continuous Report for 101082863 (BIOSINT), ERASMUS-LS, Call: ERASMUS-EDU-2022-CBHE, Topic: ERASMUS-EDU-2022-CBHE-STRAND-2].

All tools will be implemented with high performance, good functionality and stability, emphasizing the maximum reach and awareness of the target audience.

2.3. Quality of Project Management

The project management structure was established at the project's Kick-off meeting, and succeeding partners' meetings to ensure effectiveness, decisiveness, flexibility and quality of work. It involves the Executive board (EB), the Project Consortium Board (PCB), and the Quality Assurance Project Team (QAPT).

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The project management bodies will review the activities and decide on any necessary contingency measures in reorganisation tasks and resources – as usual with a strong focus on the project impact. The project management will be transparent and flexible but also strict enough to ensure the implementation of the project activities in order to achieve the project's objectives.

Each partner is equally and independently responsible for assigned activities, money use and reporting. Contact persons have the responsibility for the local management.

2.4. General Project Guidelines

BIOSINT will follow different project guidelines and respects the requirements of the programme. Apart from the Quality Management Plan (QMP) hand, the reference documents include:
- EACEA – BIOSINT project Grant Agreement
- BIOSINT- project Consortium Agreements
- BIOSINT - project Dissemination and Exploitation Plan
- BIOSINT- project budget and task assignment (according to Application form and PCB decisions)
- EACEA - Guidelines for the Use of Grants
- EACEA - Frequently Asked Questions

2.5. Amendments to the Quality Management Plan

The procedures in this Plan can be amended by agreement of all partners or by a decision taken by the project's Consortium Board (PCB). Any new version is communicated to all the partners and takes effect 10 calendar days after this communication.

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3. Internal monitoring

Internal monitoring will be carried out by all partners, including self-evaluation by using the Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) as described within project Application form, Work plan, budget and cash flow tables, PCB meetings, monitoring visits of the QAPT and questionnaires / satisfaction surveys of target groups (e.g. participants of dissemination and training events). The BIOSINT platform (EC-GMS-BIOSINT PCR) will also be used for monitoring of project activities.

3.1. Project Quality Assurance Strategy

The quality assurance in BIOSINT includes three levels of quality control (1) Deliverable authors, Task-, and WP-leaders, (2) Deliverable reviewers - Coordinator level (QAPT), and (3) Project Consortium Board level.

1.   Deliverable authors, task and WP leaders:

The 1st level corresponds to the activity level. The presentation of deliverables and activities of the project are a joint responsibility of the associated Task Leader and his/her team, partners involved in the activity and corresponding WP leader.
It shall guarantee the quality and timeliness of the deliverable as identified in Application form and action plan (modified and agreed by the PCB on six-month basis). They present a "final draft deliverable" to the QAPT (i.e. the deliverable reviewers).

2.   Deliverable reviewers - Coordinator level (QAPT Team):

The 2nd level of control is elaborated by at least two assigned reviewers of the QAPT who are not authors of the deliverable. The reviewers have 5 working days to respond by sending comments using the template for the quality assurance (template for review of deliverable) (Annex A). The deliverable authors have 5 more working days to conform to the reviewer comments or send their written objections. In this case the reviewers will have another 5 days to send back their final comments.

In case profound disagreements between reviewers and Task leaders arise, the 2rd level control of the deliverables will allow the project coordinator – the Leader of WP1 to have a final say – with the possibility (if necessary) to involve the rest of the consortium if deemed necessary.

A draft deliverable that has passed the 2nd level of control will still be proof by Coordinator Leader WP1 and it will be forwarded to the Project Consortium Board for formal approval (if required).

3.   Project Consortium Board level:

The 3th level control is done at the Project Consortium Board level. The PCB is the highest decision making body of the partnership that takes the final decision for the approval of major deliverables.

It shall be possible to include a deliverable in the project reports even if its formal approval is still pending, if it has passed the 2nd level of control without profound disagreements as then no major alterations are to be expected.

It is expected that the partners will also establish internal quality control mechanisms, i.e. the contact persons will always check the output of his/her project team before sending documents to the review or before uploading them on the BIOSINT. The QAPT serve as focal point for communication with partners' contact persons of Quality Control (QC).

3.2. Quality responsibilities - Quality infrastructure

Different roles are identified with reference to the development of the project activities and in particular the project quality assurance procedures. Different responsibilities are associated with the different roles and infrastructure of BIOSINT project.

3.2.1. Task Leader (main author of the deliverable)

- Is responsible for coordinating the development of the deliverable(s) according to the deliverable template;
- Is responsible for assigning parts of the work to other partners involved in the activity;
- Is responsible for coordinating the work of other partners involved in the activity, providing guidance when necessary;
- Is responsible for aligning the contributions of the other partners involved in the activity, in order to produce the deliverable;
- Is responsible for the submission of the draft deliverable to the WP leader (1st level control), the QAPT (2nd level control);
- Is responsible for implementing the suggestions of the QAPT team, assigning certain amendments as appropriate;
- Is responsible for sending the amended draft deliverable;
- Reports to the WP Leader for any problems occurring during the implementation of the activity;
- Cooperates with the WP Leader and other partners in the same WP in order to ensure the activity's progress in conformity with other activities and that any cross- activity inputs and outputs are being delivered as foreseen by the WP description (respecting any changes approved by the Project Consortium Board as recorded in the respective minutes).

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3.2.2. Other partners involved in the activity, co-authors

- Are responsible for the production of their part in the deliverable according to the Task Leader's instructions;
- Make sure that their written contributions comply with the Word Document Template so that to ensure that the Task Leader will be able to put all contributions together in the desirable format;
- Are responsible for providing to the Task Leader all the complementary information regarding their work (i.e. references, bibliography, methodologies used, contact details of people interviewed etc.);
- Are responsible to implement amendments to their contribution as a result of the amendments requested by the QAPT team, after consulting with the Task Leader;

3.2.3. WP Leader

- Is responsible for delivery of up-to-date information on the WP progress, making sure that all activities are in the time frame defined in the Action Plan;
- Is responsible for coordinating the Work Package and ensuring that all the activities are contributing to the WP's objectives;
- Cooperates with the Task Leaders and the coordinator in ensuring that all of the contributing partners are smoothly cooperating with a view to accomplish the WP's objectives and that any cross-WP inputs and outputs are being delivered as foreseen by the project description;
- Sends alerts on time to remind about submission deadlines and the procedures to be followed and provides input and suggestions to the Task Leaders of the WP during the development of the relevant deliverables;
- Provides to the Task Leaders comments and suggestions on the draft deliverables (1st level control);
- Cooperates with the Task Leaders in ensuring the implementation of the suggestions of the QAPT team and Project Coordinator (2nd level control), as well with PCB (3th level) if necessary;
- Verifies the satisfactory implementation of the recommendations.

3.2.4 Quality Assurance Project Team (QAPT)

- Is coordinated by the QAPT Coordinator, as agreed by the Project Consortium Board at the Kick-off meeting or forthcoming meetings;
- Is responsible for the Quality Assurance exercise of deliverables;
- Receives each draft deliverable from the Task Leader and provides feedback using the Template for review of deliverable (Annex A);
- Sends the fulfilled report/template of review of deliverable to the Task Leader, or WPs leaders and to the Project Coordinators – Leader of WP1;
- Verifies the satisfactory implementation of the recommendations included in the report of review of deliverable, in cooperation with the WP Leaders;

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- Cooperates with the Project Coordinator on general issues related to the level of quality of the project's deliverables as appropriate.

3.2.5. Project Coordinator

- Cooperates with the QAPT and the Task Leaders on all matters arising relevant to ensuring the quality of the project's deliverables;
- Accepts the deliverable or provides final comments to the Task Leaders and WP Leaders (2rd level control);
- Cooperates with the WP Leaders in order to ensure that all WPs are progressing in conformity with each other and that any cross-WP inputs and outputs are being delivered as foreseen by the WP description;
- Informs the QAPT, the WP Leaders and the Task Leaders of any changes in the Consortium Agreement and the related Work Plan or any implicit changes in the implementation of the project that may affect the timing or the content of the relevant deliverables;
- Officially submits to EACEA portal all approved deliverables after their approval at 3th level control.

3.2.6. Project Consortium Board (PCB)

- Officially approves and finally accepts of the major deliverables and QA Annual Report.

3.3. Quality feedback by the target groups

The satisfaction of stakeholders, beneficiaries and end users will also be investigated. It will take into account a variety of information from different sources using visits, interviews, questionnaires to target groups and consultation with the project beneficiaries.
In order to allow the impact assessment of the project activities, a template for feedback for different meetings / Event Evaluation Form was developed (Annex E). Furthermore, a specific Event Report-Minutes template (Annex F) has been developed which is to be filled by project partners (organisers) for all BIOSINT events (workshops, info days, trainings, etc.). Event evaluation (feedback) will include a summary review of statistical data with graphical presentations collected by participants about their satisfaction. Evaluation report will include a short narrative report and review of statistical data.

3.4. Project Risk Management

As part of the internal quality management, a regular risk assessment will be carried and reviewed out during the PCB meetings (risk brainstorming) which shall lead to corrective actions and potential adaptations of the Work Plan based on a sound process.

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The risk management strategy is detailed within the Risk Management Plan (RMP), for which adoption the PCB is responsible. The strategy addresses issues that could potentially endanger the achievement of the overall goal of the project and its objectives considering potential financial risks (overspending and underspending), timing (postponing of activities / deliverables), performance risks (project management), and sustainability of the project results. The main aim will be to provide a sound assessment, to anticipate challenges in a systematic way and to minimize the potentially negative overall impact.

The identification and assessment of new risks is a joint responsibility of all project partners who have to communicate them to the Project Coordinator and the Project Consortium Board, eventually suggesting also possible interventions and solutions, as soon as they get aware of those risks. In particular, partners may think of preventive actions (avoiding that the risk occurs) and corrective actions (decreasing the severity and impact), specifying also the resources that would be needed.

The Project Consortium Board may react in several ways, ranging from the simple acceptance of the situation in the case of negligible risks, to the enforcement of a mitigation plan including alternatives, workarounds and the proposed corrective actions that will make the risk consequences acceptable for the consortium.

Also the external reviewers (representatives of NEO/NA and EACEA) will be involved in the risk management. During their monitoring visits (or emergency visits) they will assess if there is a risk that the project will fail to meet its key indicators and if there is a risk that project partners will not be able to spend all the money according to the planned project budget. Beside external reviewers, the project bodies responsible for overall project coordination and QA could conduct the emergency visit to the project partner institution in cases related to the risk management.

The proper allocation of resources to the project by the individual project partners is of utmost importance. There are several possible risks connected: the delay of the project implementation as defined in the project work plan; the rushed implementation of the work plan with low quality; an underspending during the project implementation (also causing a shift in the headings' ratio), meaning that the project timetable is followed with reference to technical deliverables, yet the relevant expenditures are not timely invoiced or validated; etc.

The project partners all have to ensure that they allocate the needed resources to the project, both human and financial.

3.4.1. Practical approach to risk identification

The first step in project risk management is to identify the risks that are present in a project. The risks should furthermore be identified as early as possible in order to deal with them properly and to think about corrective and/or preventive actions.

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In order to identify and monitor the risks within BIOSINT project, a Risks Monitoring Sheet has been developed including the information on corrective and/or preventive actions (Annex G).

3.4.2. Risks / Uncertainties monitoring procedure

1. WP leaders (or Task leaders) identify possible risks/uncertainties in their WP and fill in the template (Annex G).
2. The risks monitoring sheet (Annex G) are communicated to QAPT Team plus WP1 Leader (UniKg) plus Project coordinator manager (UniKg)
3. QAPT Team plus WP1 Leader (UniKg) plus Project Coordinator manger (UniKg) register, analyses and priorities risks/uncertainties (WP1 co-leaders, KE Leuven, UMF would be involved, as necessary)
4. QAPT Team plus WP1 Leader (UniKg) plus Project Coordinator manger (UniKg) plans and implements risk responses.
5. PCB meetings will be used also to organize a risk brainstorming sessions basing on the Annex G template. After each PCB meeting this template will be updated by QAPT Team.

4. External monitoring

External monitoring will be performed by National Erasmus + Office according EACEA regulation.

5. Partners' technical and financial reporting

The main guidelines for the reporting are laid out in the **Grant Agreement** between European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) and BIOSINT project Coordinator (UniKg) and other beneficiaries (partner institutions), for contractual and financial management, which will be distributed to all partners. As it will be defined in the BIOSINT **Consortium Agreement**, within the part of Contractual and Financial Management, there will be 6 technical reports of the partners (internal reporting). In addition, there are 2 financial periodic reports, required for interim and final budget payments. Work Package leaders/Executive Board members from each partner institutions will check the Reports and supporting documents that are sent to the Project Coordinator (UniKg) as hard and/or electronic copies. During the review, the following assessment criteria will be taken into consideration:

- Conformity of the expenditures with the budget of the project;
- Eligibility of the expenditures;
- Correctness and completeness of all supporting documents and certified copies of invoices;
- Correctness of the calculations and applied exchange rates;
- That any changes which occurred between budget categories are eligible and justified;

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- Financial biannual reports must be signed in original by the appointed contact person of partner institution;
- Expenditures must be in conformity, including full eligibility, with the allocated budget.

In case that information in the Report is not complete or justified, the Project Consortium Board will help and make recommendations on how this situation can be rectified prior to the final approval of the Report by the Project Coordinator (UniKg). The Report approved in this way is the basis for the transfer of the next instalment to the partner institution.

Different supporting documents have been elaborated for the overall enhancement of the project quality assurance plan.

LIST OF ANNEXES

1.   Annex A - Memorandum document
2.   Annex B - Power Point Presentation Template
3.   Annex C - Event Attendance List Template
4.   Annex D - Event Evaluation Form Template
5.   Annex E - Event Report Minutes Template
6.   Annex F - Deliverable List and Review Form
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