



Partner Meeting (PM)

Wednesday 20 February 2008: 10.30 - 16.30
UNISON NW, Manchester, UK

MINUTES

Present:

UNISON NW, UK (contractor)	Frank Hont & Lynne Morris
University Liverpool, UK	Alison Hughes (co-ordinator) & Carol Stewart
University of Vaasa, FI	Jouko Havunen
METALL Murikka, FI	Aki Ojakangas & Jouko Reijonen
Carl Von Ossietzky University Oldenburg, DE	Ina Grieb
Arbeit und Leben, DE	Bernd Bischoff
University of Versailles, FR	Alain Nicolas / Francis Rogard, Elena Poles
University of Primorska, SI	Valentina Franca
Gh. Asachi Technical University of Iasi, RO	Gabriela Atanasiu
Sindic. Salar, RO	Stefan Grigoras
University Tartu, EE	Ülle Kesli
Kaunas University of Technology, LT	Daiva Dumciuviene & Rita Remeikiene
External Evaluator	Kari Seppälä
University Liverpool, UK	Rebekah Ryland in attendance

Apologies from CGT – represented by Versailles.

1/2. Welcome & Partner Introductions

Frank Hont, UNISON NW welcomed all to the first full partner meeting and partners introduced themselves.

3. Discussion of Project Activities & Financial and administrative details (see also attached AJH PowerPoint presentation)

- **Admin matters**
AJH asked that travel reports be emailed to her first for confirmation before sending the original copy to UNISON NW. They should specify the times of start of outward and end of return journey also in order to confirm the reported per diems.
Although they only have to be sent to AJH once per annum, it is also important that time sheets are regularly updated by partners to fully capture all the activity. A separate sheet must be completed for each individual involved e.g. for Versailles at the Manchester meeting for 3 people.
- **Website and publications**
Partners agreed that the TULIP logo and new leaflet were appropriate. Each partner took a supply of leaflets for use in disseminating the project in their own country.
It was noted that the TULIP website is not yet operational; but will be within the next few weeks – AJH to notify partners in due course. Partners agreed to the suggested layout. It was agreed that the Versailles website

could be used by partners as a closed chat room facility e.g. for partners to put up draft documents to ask for comment from other partners. The formal TULIP website will be fully open public access with all formal project documents/resources/materials hosted on that site.

- **Resource Kit, including bibliography**
Partners were asked to send to AJH at any time relevant articles / weblinks for inclusion on the website.
- **National Reports**
It was agreed that RO, SI, EE, LT will produce reports in Year 1 with DE, FI, FR, UK producing their reports in Year 2. It was also noted that the political & legislative context is important when compiling these reports.
- **Dissemination**
Reports to be sent in twice per annum. It was noted that some dissemination had already been accomplished - IG had attended a conference in South Africa and told delegates of the work of TULIP. This would be recorded on the report form. IG also noted that dissemination can be deeply embedded through study visits by partners – Management Group (MG) to discuss.
- **List of experts**
Partners will start to compile details of experts and send them in using the form. DE has already started to compile this list. It was noted that the language of the expert should also be included on the form.
- **Conference**
UoL to discuss with RO partners tomorrow and report to MG. Likely to be end May/start June 2009.
- **Next partner meeting – Tallinn, EE, 6-8 November 2008**
This will be at the EUCEN autumn conference and TULIP delegates will have an opportunity to engage with the other delegates.

4. Discussion re Case Studies & Descriptive Papers

DE, FI, FR, UK partners gave presentations regarding their proposed Case Studies (see attached presentations). The twinned partners had already met together to develop their ideas.

- **Germany** – will concentrate on the added value for both TU and Unis in working together & the successes, problems/issues that have arisen over a number of years close co-operative working between the 2 partners. The Liaison Office is a common feature of a number of DE universities/TUs but all operate independently. Current issues include interregional activities and the internationalisation of occupational education.
- **Finland** – recognising that TUs are seen as key stakeholders in FI society, personal motivational issues pose challenges for TU members to engage in LLL. The case study will concentrate on a piece of drama to test the TU members' engagement with these issues. TU officials, employers federations and Uni academics will be involved in the evaluation of the effectiveness of this innovative technique. The use of drama is intended to address the issue of using language appropriate to the target group compared to international management terminology.

- **France** -will review the role of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL/VAE) as a tool for enabling individuals to access LLL and achieving social change as a result of this. The value of APL in recognising competences gained and knowledge learned in the workplace/ TU arena will be especially considered. The Case Study, using the French experience as an example, aims to draw out global themes that incorporate the role of local and regional government in this arena.
- **UK** – will build on the already existing relationship between UNISON NW and UoL, which started out as a research-based piece of work and has developed into other services provided by the university for TU members e.g. reading groups. It will show how from modest beginnings a co-operative relationship can be developed to benefit both the TU, learners (TU members) and also the universities, in exposing them to new perspectives.

It was noted that all the Case Studies would provide different models of co-operation and also expose all partners (and the wider audience through the resource kit and conference) to different national discussion/ issues/ strengths. For example in the UK TUs are often not seen as major stakeholders in society whereas in FI they are recognised as such.

5. Network Evaluation and Future Kari Seppälä, University of Turku

The presentation (see attached) and resulting discussion noted that:

- The purpose of the evaluation is developmental and not just process-oriented.
- It is to review the core aims of **learning, networking** and **development** that are being achieved by the partners and stakeholders over the life of the project.
- The first element of the evaluation will be a web-based questionnaire with open questions for all partners to complete in March/April 2008. Completion date for this will be confirmed by the MG tomorrow, and the results/interim evaluation report will be discussed at the next PM in EE. The aim of this 1st questionnaire is for partners to reflect on how to develop the network and the 2nd one will include additional questions to see how these ideas have been addressed.
- Questions are divided into 4 groups (see presentation) to include motivations of partners for joining the network and how to embed the activity within our own organisations. Partners should focus not on administrative issues but on key areas of importance for them in working in the project.
- Partners should complete this with concrete answers in order to be able to provide a rationale for future development e.g. in Section A what exactly they are planning to learn from the project etc.
- Section B - in reviewing other projects we are engaged in, we should reflect not just on weblinks / articles but also the **ideas** learned as these can feed this network.
- Section C – effecting change in our own organisation could include running staff development events, which often is not sufficiently utilised in international projects.
- Section D –dissemination is not just at the end of the project but throughout the period. There is no need to be rigid about the objectives – e.g. new ways of working is a good goal in itself.
- KS will see all materials produced by the project as they are developed.
- The MG will be expected to act on the outcomes of the evaluation.

6. Presentations by Professor Bill Jones (UaLL /NIACE) & Tony Saunders (Unionlearn NW) followed by Group discussions

See attached presentations from Bill Jones and Tony Saunders, which gave a very useful UK perspective on LLL from both the university and Trade Union sectors.

Points from the two Group discussions included:

- Younger people are not engaged in many ways with TU activity, and therefore are unable to access LLL via TUs (this is a common theme in a number of the partner countries e.g. EE, DE and UK also).
- EE – TUs mainly in 3 areas – teachers, bus drivers, medical. These have little funding and with a free economy the state is not inclined to support much union activity. University of Tartu has only c. 10% of 3000 employees who are TU members.
- The issue remains how can TUs engage in learning when issues such as wages/workers' rights are of primary importance (e.g. in SI). The issue will be how universities in SI can engage TUs in meaningful discussion to open up ULLL opportunities for their members. In RO too a main issue remains low wages for employees. The example in a number of partner countries of 'Open Universities' with open access and flexible delivery will prove an interesting model.
- An important outcome of the project will be to see how partners (TU and Uni) are exploring ULLL opportunities for TU members **both** from a **policy**-based approach and a **problem**-based approach. This will bring richness to the project. For example policy is no longer such an issue in FI (unlike EE and SI) and in the case of the FI and FR partners their Case Studies will be able to explore a problem-based approach i.e. looking at vocational/workplace learning and APL.
- The FR experience of recognition of industrial diplomas will also bring an added dimension, addressing the issues of mobility, certification and the European Qualification Framework. Their experience is that often the short term needs of employers result in staff obtaining these diplomas when their individual need is for more in-depth ULLL.
- Despite the competing agendas at EU, national and regional level about TU members accessing ULLL, the workplace is often the most difficult arena of all to engage in the debate. For example in FI barriers at EU/Nat/ reg. level are not so much the issue as the individual motivations of the learners. FI legislation now requires companies to write staff development plans for all their staff. Size of workplace affects the LLL agenda.
- An issue that needs to be addressed is the differing 'languages' of business and education. DE partner also felt that the issue of 'competence' versus 'knowledge' terminology needs to be addressed.
- Capturing skills/ knowledge achieved by an individual whilst holding 'office' in TU so that when they cease to be a TU official their LLL is appropriately recognised is an ongoing issue e.g. in UK. How do Unis recognise this and award credit for it?
- An important element of the project will be to draw conclusions about the 'bigger picture' from the examples in the network to inform ongoing co-operative development e.g. learning from the long-time DE co-operation model.

7. Any other business

None