



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



Guidelines for Validation
of
the Self Assessment questionnaire,
Methods and tools for the Case Study format

Qua.Lobster Project

The Project QUA.LOBSTER (1/2)

The project Qua.Lobster

- The project QUA.LOBSTER intend to develop and provide a support tool for FSS organisations in assessing their own development stage towards the Learning Organisation model, and in devising appropriate strategies and actions to increase effectiveness and become a Learning Organisation. In doing so, QUA.LOBSTER embeds a Quality Assurance approach in the benchmarking system, with expected benefits in terms of quality of the training provision and of human resources active role within FSS organisations. This will improve diversity management by fostering organisational learning.
- Qua.lobster addresses, as primary target groups, Trainers, Human Resources Specialists, professional working for the promotion of the Learning Organisation in Human Resources Development, Organisational Development and Organisation Departments, in the Banking and Financial Services Sector. In addition, the project also addresses the needs of employees who will benefit from the improved training provisions due to the application of quality management tools and taking into account the results of the benchmarking exercise.

The Project QUA.LOBSTER (2/2)

- QUA.LOBSTER's objectives are: to apply the benchmarking approach to the FSS; to improve diversity management using a tool based on Learning Organisation and Quality Assurance criteria with piloting in two European Countries; to offer a validated benchmarking approach to the FSS in order to increase quality of training services; to create a European-wide laboratory for innovation as a virtual community of practice; to apply the European Common Quality Assurance Framework and management tools to improve Lifelong Learning processes of FSS employees.

Methods and tools: the self assessment exercise

- For the self-assessment, the Piloting Countries will be in charge of deciding who will take part in the exercise, taking into account these 2 main criteria: number of participants for a total of 10 people (to give a general idea, around 3 managers and 7 employees) and function within the Bank, e.g:
 - HR Central and Branches*
 - Employees
 - Top Management representatives
 - **Other stakeholders who are involved in HR management, such as trade unions, associations of employers and employees, main HR consultants of the Bank, ect...

Methods and tools: the self assessment exercise

- *if there are no HR Managers in the Branches, it is recommended to select Branch Managers instead.
- **their involvement is optional and it is up to the Bank's judgement whether or not involve them, and in which form.
- The self-assessment exercise can be carried out in 2 ways:
- Sending the questionnaire through the e-mail to the people selected, who will fill it in and return it within a week. It is essential for the participants to carry out individual assessing prior to the Focus Group.
- The same day of the Focus Group, prior to the session and in separate rooms to guarantee privacy.
- It is fundamental that the individual exercise is conducted before the Focus Group and that the FG Coordinator has had the chance to look at the results before starting the FG session.

Methods and tools: the focus group

- What is a Focus Group?
 - Focus Groups can be thought of as a collective face to face interview, usually with people from a common background. They are typically used to examine group processes and interactions; examine power structures within groups; identify weaknesses and room for improvement in innovations. For our purposes the Focus Groups are likely to be a discussion group (where a facilitator or expert facilitates debate on a structured theme)
- Who should be involved in the Focus Group discussions?
 - A representative sample of the 'target' audience. This sample needs to reflect the characteristics of the people involved in the application.

Methods and tools: the focus group

- Focus Group Interviews: how to run them
 - The group discussion is 'focused' or structured by a 'facilitator' and there should in addition be present one or two additional observers or recorders to gather data on the outputs of the discussion. Tape recordings of the discussion will assist in subsequent analysis of the data, but there is a trade off in using tape recorders in terms of confidentiality and respondent resistance . Transcription and analysis of tapes is also very resource-intensive and time-consuming.

Methods and tools: the focus group

- QUA.LOBSTER Focus Group

All people selected to fill in the questionnaire, will be invited to take part in a Focus Group which will have 2 main objectives:

- Identify if and where there are discrepancies in answers referring to the same topic and discuss them
- Collect opinions about the tool

For this purpose it is recommended to have a set of draft questions prior to the Focus Group to facilitate the gathering of useful information, which will be written down and used for the case study.

Methods and tools: the focus group

- Suggestion questions are:
 - On this topic you seem to have different opinions: would you explain in more detail what you think about the subject?
 - You all seem to have rather negative judgment. What do you suggest the solution could be?
 - On the whole how did you find the experience of the questionnaire?
 - What do you think about the questionnaire? What would you change, delete or add?
 - What do you think about the session? Would you suggest involving more/different people?

Methods and tools: Case Study - “identity card”

- Name of the Organisation
- Type of bank [e.g. local Bank, international bank]
- Number of employees
- Category [e.g. Private banking, financial bank]
- Other information that you consider useful to identify the type of Organisation

Methods and tools: Case Study - “identity card”

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Methods and tools:

Case Study – short introduction

- Who coordinated the piloting and if there has been already a similar experience in the Bank in the past or still in progress
- Who's been invited to carry out the exercise?
- How many replied?
- Whom of the ones that replied took part to the Focus Group session?
- In which period did the piloting exercise took place?
- Typology of Stakeholders (e.g. HR, branches, top management)

Methods and tools: Case Study – main chapter

- the approach the Bank has towards LO, QA, DV
- from where and when they started implementing actions leading to LO, QA and DV
- the kind of support they received in developing the system, if any
- the evolution of the approach within the organisation
- present level of implementation and future trends

Methods and tools: Case Study – windows

Windows of best practices

- 1 to 5 windows of best practices (max 1 page each)
- Please note that these windows should not contain confidential information because they are intended to be the basis for the Benchmarking / Benchlearning exercise of the Innovation Laboratory

Methods and tools: Case Study – overview

Overview of strengths and weaknesses

- Please indicate results of the questionnaire which point out weaknesses and strengths of the Bank

Methods and tools: Case Study – Implem. plan

First steps towards an Improvement Plan

- What are the concrete steps you are going to take or that you are already implementing towards improvement?

Methods and tools: Feedback form

Feedback form on QUA.LOBSTER questionnaire and methods

- This form will to be filled by the piloting coordinator (see Annex 2 of the Guidelines)
- The aim of this process is to collect all useful feedback on the questionnaire in the perspective of creating the Benchmarking questionnaire based on the Self Assessment tool.