



Blended Training for Staff

Outline

This document aims to provide the guidelines to assist teachers participating in the EPIC project, in particular, on the following two aspects:

- How to support international collaboration among students
- How to instruct and supervise students

1 Introduction: Lessons learned from COLIBRI

COLIBRI was an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership, which lasted from 2014 to 2017, driven by a consortium of seven universities and three companies (most of them now in EPIC). The students key activity in COLIBRI was running a project, working in groups across disciplines and countries – mixing virtual and physical mobility.

In 3-year project duration with three iterations (one per year) of the course, the consortium accumulated a lot of experience in supporting International collaboration among students. Making students working efficiently in a virtual collaboration was the most challenging part, but it was successful! During these 3 years, the perceived efficiency increased from 50% to 85%. This was reflected in the evaluation tests of the effectiveness of the different components of the project, both overall and with respect to the physical collaboration in the groups during the seminars.

All in all, COLIBRI achieved a good progress making the virtual collaboration among students more efficient. This was possible providing a much more structured approach to the students, while still ensuring that the projects were student driven.

However, the virtual collaboration is still the weakest link of the International collaboration among students. EPIC project, where the virtual collaboration has an even higher relevance, is a new opportunity to counteract this weakness. The EPIC consortium aims to keep and increase COLIBRI achievements in the new project, and use them as the starting point of the guidelines...

- “for supporting International collaboration among students” and
- “for instructing and supervising students”

2 Guidelines for supporting International collaboration among students

The guidelines for supporting International collaboration among students inherited from COLIBRI, which will be applied to EPIC, are the following:

- Make the project assignments as earlier as possible, making it compatible with the universities registration periods, but the sooner the better.
- During the “**Project planning seminar**”:



- Bring together the groups, so the students have time to know each other from the beginning.
- Prioritize the group work and collaboration of the students with the same project assignment.
- Increase the number of supervision meetings, not only by requests from the students, but by panel discussions where students could ask questions on their projects.
 - With this, it can be ensured that the students achieve a good problem understanding and supervisors can also exchange their knowledge and experience on how groups have a good start on the virtual phase.
- In the panel discussions, appoint teachers representing a broad spectrum of expertise.
- Help the students to better structure the work during the virtual collaboration phase.
 - Request the students to prepare more specific plans – including meetings and milestones. With this, the students get provided with templates to be used for task descriptions, meeting minutes and time plans.
 - It is also a good practice that during the virtual phase, supervisors ask their groups to submit a short report (e.g., every two weeks) on status of the project.

3 Guidelines for instructing and supervising students

The guidelines for instructing and supervising students to be applied within EPIC, are the following:

- Help the students to get an explicit joint understanding of the project goals, and be aware that words and concepts have different meanings for different students.
- Elaborate a working plan (meetings to hold, work to be done and milestones / deliverables to deliver) for the virtual collaboration phases, which have to be detailed enough:
 - Including what is expected from each team member.
 - Providing templates for meeting agendas, minutes, specific tasks and milestones / deliverables to support all these items.
- Throughout the project, follow up the plan with short intervals (adjust as needed, but don't be laissez-faire)
- Support the students in working very structured!

4 Guidelines for students registration and assessment

Since, the bachelor/master thesis done under the EPIC umbrella will have one advisor from the company proposing the project, and two supervisors, namely one from the University of Origin (student will register the thesis) and another from another university of the EPIC consortium, there will be good practices to establish:

- Rules for the students to be assessed:



In order that the students can be assessed within the same semester during which the work is done, EPIC students will have to register and follow the calendar of their University of origin. EPIC students will also have the option of making a pre-registration. In this case, the regulation to follow will be that of the University of Origin, which can be different at the different universities of the EPIC consortium.

■ Assessment procedures:

Thesis defence procedures, which by default will be done in the University of Origin, but as an exception, can also be done at the university of the external supervisor. In this case, it will be necessary:

- To agree on an assessment form to be filled in by the company advisor and the External University supervisor. A suggested sample for this has been enclosed in the **Annex I** of this document.
- The later review from the Local University supervisor to guarantee that the bachelor/master thesis fits with the academic requirement of the Local University.

■ Thesis defence:

For the registration of the thesis defence, EPIC students will have to follow the same procedure as the ordinary students, but adding the external "supervisor's assessment" and a mobility questionnaire, if it is required by the University of Origin.

For example, such a procedure may consist of deposit the final thesis report according with the university deadline, get the validation form the local supervisor

In the case that the company imposes the confidentiality of the topic, the corresponding Non-Disclosure Agreement signed by the student and the company will have to be submitted.



Annex I: Supervisor's assessment form

Name of the Student:

Name of the Supervisor:

Company or University:

Address:

Topic/title of the Bachelor/Master Thesis:

Please fill in the lines indicated by ...[EX-VG-G-S-I] where:

- EX means Excellent
- VG means Very good
- G means Good
- S means Sufficient, and
- I means Insufficient

1. STUDENT'S BEHAVIOUR DURING THE PROJECT

According to your impression, the student's behaviour during the project appeared to be...

In particular, what do you think about:

- His/her motivation ...
- Degree of integration in the team ...
- Sense of organisation ...
- Sense of responsibility ...

[Insert your comments, if any]

2. WORK PERFORMED AND RESULTS

The work performed by the student seemed to you:

- In volume ...
- In quality ...

The utility of the realisation/development/study seems to be:

[Insert your comments, if any]

3. SCIENTIFIC APTITUDES:

What do you think about:

- The scientific knowledge of the student ...
- His/her theoretic abilities ...
- Practical abilities ...

[Insert your comments, if any]



4. PROJECT REPORT:

- General contents . . .
- Is it a document to be used directly by your company or university?

5. GENERAL IMPRESSION:

In case that a colleague or an employer asked you to recommend the student for a job as the one he/she was occupying during the stage, what would be your advice? (This appreciation is only for the purpose of student’s evaluation)

[Insert your comments, if any]

6. PROJECT EVALUATION (for Companies):

Please, provide a numerical overall evaluation of the project:

- in a range 0-10: . . . (0 Minimum, 10 Maximum, ≥ 5 required for ECTS recognition)

As a reference for both Companies and Universities, the official academic grading at ETSETB – UPC are:

- A/Excellent with Honour Distinction, “Matrícula d’Honor” (10, **only for ≤5% of the best Final Degree Projects at each Academic Course**);
- A/Excellent, “Excellent” (9 to 9.9);
- B/Outstanding, “Notable” (7 to 8.9);
- C/Pass, “Aprovat” (5 to 6.9);
- D/Fail, “Suspens de Qualificació” (less than 5)

7. PROJECT ACADEMIC EVALUATION (for University only):

The project has been academically evaluated? YES , NO

If yes, the project has been academically evaluated, then please, provide the following data:

- Academic grade: . . . Data of evaluation: . . .
- Equivalent grade in a range 0-10: . . . (0 Minimum, 10 Maximum, ≥ 5 required for ECTS recognition)

DATE (day/ month/ year)

Signature:
