

VALMOPRIS
Note of First Meeting
October 2015, Glasgow/Motherwell, Scotland

The note of the first VALMOPRIS meeting is an action note rather than a full chronological record of all the discussion at the meeting. It highlights the main issues discussed and the key actions to be undertaken prior to the next meeting in France, in April 2016.

The Project

The partners took some time to re-visit the project and to ensure that all partners understood the aims and objectives and their roles in the project. It became clear during discussions that few if any of the partners around the table had had a proactive involvement in the project application. The current lead partner had been asked to lead the project at a relatively late stage in the project's development and most of the other partners had agreed to participate but not had a direct input to the project design as such. As the individual who had led on the project was no longer involved and not present to clarify questions, it took some time to clarify the detail of the project aims and objectives and the project timeline.

However, this process was useful in helping to clarify the project detail and to elucidate the roles and remits of the individual partners.

All partners are committed to the principle of developing a process for the validation of informal learning in prisons.

The key areas around which discussion centred are outlined below.

The Budget

The partners clarified the budget allocations and the number of days allocated to each partner. It was agreed that in some cases partners may need to move budget from one heading to another. The Erasmus rules allow 20% variation to budget headings. Most partners felt the travel and subsistence budgets were tight and there may need to be some movement to accommodate costs. There is no additional funding for evaluation – project evaluation will be the responsibility of the Austrian partner and Maren will lead on this.

It was agreed meetings would try to be run as effectively as possible to minimise costs. The possibility of two night stays instead of three would be looked at.

There is no budget for a website. It was agreed the project should have a website and Ed Santman was asked to submit costs for this. As three partners have a much larger allocation of days than the others there may need to be discussion about whether all partners should contribute to the website.

Payment schedule – partners would receive 20% up front payment and subsequent payments based on expenditure. The final 20% payment will be withheld by the Commission/National Agency from all partners until the final report has been signed off. If any partner has any cash flow problems they should notify the lead partner who will do its best to ensure there are no problems.

Partnership Agreements

The contract agreements were agreed and distributed at the meeting in Scotland and all partners were asked to add their bank details and to arrange for signature and return.

Project Communication

A draft project communication strategy was included in the papers for the Scotland meeting. It will be amended and updated to reflect discussion at the meeting. It was agreed that where possible meetings would be arranged by doodle poll to minimise email communication; Dropbox would be used to house all the project documentation; there would be regular monthly Skype meetings. It was acknowledged that not all partners would always be able to make the on-line meetings but they would take place regularly anyway, and those who could attend would. A brief action note from each of these meetings would be circulated to all partners as quickly as possible.

The Partners

It is helpful to note that there are two partners (Germany and Austria) whose main role is evaluation and input to the Level 5 work and five partners (Scotland, France, Latvia, Romania, Netherlands) whose main role is the delivery of the Level 5 model in prisons via the development of informal learning projects led by prison teachers. In the course of discussion it became clear that not all delivery partners would be doing this via prison teachers. It was also clear that partners needed some time before the next meeting to work out the practicalities of who would be involved in the development and testing of the informal learning (issue of language – those chosen would need to have a good command of English) and where and when this would take place.

Summary of those likely to be involved shown below.

Delivery Partner	Staff Members Involved in Delivering Informal Learning
Scotland	Prison Teachers
Netherlands	One project in a prison involving prison teachers; one project in the community working with ex-offenders and those at risk of offending
Romania	Prison Teachers
Latvia	Prison Social Workers and Prison Officers
France	Prison Teachers

The Level 5 Approach

It became evident during the course of the meeting that with the exception of the German and Austrian partners, no-one had heard of the Level 5 approach. While all partners were committed to the general principles of recognising informal learning there was some discussion of whether the Level 5 approach would suit every partner. Scotland was concerned that the language would be confusing in a Scottish context as “Level 5” has a particular meaning in the Scottish Qualifications

Framework. For Scotland and the Netherlands it would be helpful for any recognition of informal learning to be mapped against the national qualifications framework and potentially the European Qualifications Framework. Other delivery partners felt they could not comment on this until they had a better understanding of the Level 5 model and had some discussions with their colleagues in their own countries. It was agreed that as a result of the low level of knowledge of the Level 5 approach training on the system would be a priority for the next meeting.

In order to plan the testing of the Level 5 approach each partner was asked to complete a template outlining the planned project activity and giving some basic information about what was proposed. The template will be circulated to all partners for completion.

Project Timeline and Meeting Dates

Given the need to better understand the Level 5 approach it was agreed that the next meeting in France would be brought forward to April 2016 rather than May 2016. This would allow the first training session for the staff who would deliver the informal learning projects to be brought forward from October 2016. The timeline for the project was discussed at some length on day two resulting in a slightly revised timeline which was reordered to show each partner's responsibilities at a glance. The revised timeline was uploaded to Dropbox.

Project Outputs and Activities

There was considerable discussion around these and a need to clarify roles and responsibilities. In the table below I have attempted to clarify the structure of Outputs, Work Packages and Activities.

Events

1. Training event for prison teachers participating in the piloting – will be held before the teachers actually pilot their projects but after they have designed and planned their activities. *(The content of the activity will be based on the initial output of O3 – need therefore to ensure this work out time wise.)* FRANCE
2. Training for prison teachers to conduct future COL and VINL activities – training for a further 15 teachers based on the final version of the train the trainer course - ROMANIA
3. Conference – Validation and Motivation: Informal Learning in Prison. Will run just before or just after the EPEA conference and report on the work of the project. ***During the following 5 days the final training of a further 40 prison educators will take place starting the process of mainstreaming the VALMOPRIS results. (where does the 40 come from? Above it suggest a further 15 teachers will be trained at the second event? - ROMANIA***

Terminology

COL = Competence Oriented Learning

VINFL = Validation of Informal Learning

Output	Description	Partners Responsible/Involved
1	<p>Study and Policy Recommendations</p> <p><i>Addresses perceived gap in clear evidence of needs and potential of VINFL in prisons</i></p> <p>This output will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provide evidence of need and potential benefits of informal learning in prison – reviewing extent of work/research in this area to date in each partner country Document the pilot informal learning activities undertaken by the partners and evaluate their impact Generate policy recommendations for VINFL in prisons – EPEA to be involved in finalised policy recommendations <p>Target Group: prison educators and Prison management not yet aware of the benefits of VINFL</p> <p>The study will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Summary methodology paper, outlining the research approach Review of current literature Results of interim qualitative and quantitative survey data – <i>clarify what data?</i> <p>Output also mentions a range of things which need to be clarified with P Talbot:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Teacher survey for all 15 teachers – DieBerater to design and lead?</i> <i>Case study approach – socio-ecological model? What does this mean? 90 learners to be involved across all 5 partners? Randomised control trial approach!?</i> <i>Involves methodology paper and 2 interim reports (one on implementation of COL/VINF in prison and one on changes in motivation for prison learners)</i> <p>Produced in PDF form (60 pages) in all partner languages – suggest just summary in partner languages and full report in English.</p>	<p>Lead: Scotland</p> <p>All partners contribute</p>
2	<p>Development of Level 5 Competence Frameworks and COL Implementation Contexts</p> <p><i>Addresses the need for the development of a competence framework to accompany the development of the informal learning programme.</i></p> <p>This will involve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> an inventory of 8 key competences and 5 sub-competencies (40 sub-competencies in total). Competencies to be chosen in relation to their relevance to a prison context Creation of reference systems that describe the competencies in three dimensions (knowledge, skills, attitudes) and at five levels Will be based on the results of a survey which will have identified a range of possible competence-orientated informal learning activities that take place in prison – <i>action for Scotland or Germany to design a survey?</i> 	<p>Lead: Germany</p> <p>All partners contribute</p>



	A report produced in PDF form (70 pages) presenting the competence frameworks and the COL implementation contexts (<i>description of the pilots?</i>)	
3	<p>Train the Trainer Course for Validating Informal Learning in Prisons <i>Will address the lack of training programmes in delivery of informal learning in prisons</i></p> <p>The output will result in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a structured modular teacher training programme to train prison teachers to design and deliver informal learning activities for prisoners and validate that informal learning The teacher training programme will involve the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory of informal learning Validation approaches Designing informal COL projects Multiplier training – allowing teachers to teach their colleagues the techniques There will be two pilot projects per teacher (15 teachers in total) with a minimum of three prison learners in each (90 learners in total) The final course will produced in an e-learning format (24 hours of material) which can be delivered via EPEA <p>Final Outcome: Interactive on line course and a PDF document (50-80 pages) detailing training outline & content</p>	<p>Lead: Austria All partners contribute</p>
4	<p>Practice Guidebook for the Validation of Informal Learning in Prisons <i>Will address the need for compilation of good practice</i> Will summarise the results of the 30 projects delivered by 15 teachers. It will detail the projects under each key competence (8 in total) and provide guidance for teachers wishing to implement COL and VINFL in their prisons</p> <p>Will result in a PDR document – 30-50 pages in length. <i>In all languages – not possible? Summary will be provided in each language otherwise full document will be in English.</i></p>	<p>Lead: Scotland All partners contribute</p>

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

- All partners to return signed partnership agreements and provide bank details for first payment
- NCL to issue initial 20% payment following receipt of bank details
- All partners to submit monthly time sheets and updates to expenditure profiles. The will be due on the 1st of every month. First reports due 1 December.
- NCL to produce a detailed project summary clarifying some of the areas of confusion. KS to speak to Paul Talbot
- NCL to update project timeline
- NCL to draft research methodology paper

7. NCL to draft and issue template for desk research to ensure all research collated in the same way. All partners to engage in desk research and to provide the required information on the template by end February 2016
8. NCL to issue the project outline template (for piloting of COL/VINFL activities) – all partners to complete and return by the end of February 2016
9. Prison teachers in all the prisons across the 5 partners to receive a survey about informal education, their views on its importance, how widely it's currently used etc. This survey should extend to beyond the staff of partners themselves to a wider group of prison teachers. *(Not sure from my notes if NCL or DieBerater or Blinc is designing this survey?)*
10. Enrica to send example of competence framework for all partners to see an example by end of November – all partners can also look at their own national competence frameworks
11. Enrica to start drafting a competence inventory
12. All partners to review competences and report back on which competencies they believe most important for the project
13. The five partners involved in the piloting of COL and VINFL have to select teachers who will participate and the locations in which they will pilot the projects. Each partner to identify three staff who will each deliver two projects with a minimum of three learners.
14. France to suggest dates for next meeting
15. All partners to confirm numbers attending in France to Dominique by end January 2016
16. NCL to set up a series of regular on-line meetings via Skype
17. Netherlands to provide a costing for the website development and maintenance
18. All partners to promote project at events and via the press as and when feasible – partners to keep a note of events and take and file photographs so that this information can be included in the final project report

Proposed Schedule of Skype Meetings

Month & Date	Comment
Friday, 27 November at 10am GMT	For all except UK this will be 11am
Friday 18 December at 10 am GMT	For all except UK this will be 11am
Friday 29 January at 10am	For all except UK this will be 11am
Friday, 26 February at 10am	For all except UK this will be 11am
Friday, 18 March at 10 am*	For all except UK this will be 11am

- This date is earlier as 25 March is Good Friday, Easter Holiday

Confirmed Dates for Meeting in BORDEAUX (France)

6 – 9 April 2016 – arrive on 6th April, work 7th and 8th and depart on the 9th.