Building Mutual Trust: A Framework Project For Implementing EU Common Standards In Legal Interpreting And Translation (JLS/2007/JPEN/219)

**Report of Steering Group meeting: Middlesex University, London 22-23 May 2008**

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Preamble
The first meeting (Steering Group) of the Building Mutual Trust project  (JPEN 217) was held on 15th May 2008 at Middlesex University in London.  Six of the seven Steering Group participants were in attendance (see above).

The meeting agenda and meeting objectives can be found in Annex A to this report. This report will take the form of a summary of the meeting and decisions taken in relation to each of the meeting's objectives.


**MEETING OBJECTIVE 1: AGREE AND REFINE ACHIEVEABLE GOALS FOR PROJECT**

The meeting confirmed the following six key deliverables for the project, in line with the project application:

i       The Establishment Of 'Benchmark' Criteria For Legal Interpreters And Translators (LITs) In The EU Member States

ii      The Design Of Training Courses For LITs

iii     The Design Of Training Materials For Use In LIT Training Courses

iv      The Design Of Training The Trainer (ToT) Courses For LIT Trainers

v       The Development Of Supporting Resources For LIT Training

vi      In-Service Training For Legal Services Personnel


**i       The Establishment Of 'Benchmark' Criteria For Legal Interpreters And Translators (LITs) In The EU Member States**

a    This will require the setting of minimum performance criteria for the necessary skills and knowledge set of LITs practicing in EU member states

b    Benchmarking is to be expressed as a map of the required competencies and skills for achievement of the benchmark. The United Kingdom National Occupational Standards (www.ukstandards.org) was suggested as a possible model of how competencies and skills might be mapped. Benchmarking will also require the definition of performance criteria for the achievement of the benchmark (see a above)

c    The benchmarking process presupposes the training of examiners and the establishment of methodologies for designing assessment instruments. Reference was made to the European Association for Language Testing and Assessment (http://www.ealta.eu.org) as a possible source of information for this task

d    The setting of a common benchmark (as described above) may be followed by setting of 'lower' and 'higher' benchmarks as required.  For example, a lower set of criteria could be established for the use of LITs in emergency or first contact situations only. A higher set of criteria could be used for the accreditation of LITs to higher professional levels

NB: these standards were recommended in the first Grotius project (Aequitas) and agreed by the Commission


**ii      The Design Of Training Courses For LITs**

The design of training course templates for use in the training of LITs in EU member states is a key deliverable for the project outlined in the project application. The first step will be to identify the core components of LIT training courses that will lead to accreditation at benchmark level (see i.a). Also required will be:

a    The setting of entry (selection) and exit criteria for training packages

b    Establishment of selection methodologies for evaluation of applicants to training programmes

c    Establishment of  on-course assessment criteria and assessment methodologies

Evaluation rather than certification is to be the guiding principle behind assessment methodologies. Assessment and accreditation is to be vocational rather than academic, based around achievement and demonstration of core competencies at equivalent standards throughout the EU. The meeting agreed that academic accreditation should be a matter for individual member states to implement if desired.

### iii    The Design Of Training Materials For Use In LIT Training Courses

The design of training materials at all levels for dissemination and use in EU member states is a key deliverable for the project. The meeting decided that:

a    The design of training materials is to be guided by a vocational rather than academic approach

b    Training materials are to be designed with the aim of developing demonstrable core competencies in the LIT trainee (see 2.3)

c    Materials produced during the life of the project will be 'banked' as the project progresses for dissemination and use via publication or online, in the event that funding for the supplementary project referred to in 4.3 is not secured

### iv    The Design Of Training The Trainer (ToT) Courses For LIT Trainers

The design of training the trainers (ToT) course templates is another key deliverable for the project. This task is to be achieved by:

a    Mapping of best existing practice in ToT

b    Description of ToT methodologies

c    Production of ToT course templates

d    Production of supporting ToT materials

**v       The Development Of Supporting Resources For LIT Training**

The meeting agreed that the evaluation of the opportunities offered by online learning facilities (webCT, online learning platforms, distance learning modes of study) for LIT training in EU member states would be a key deliverable for the project. To this end, an online learning platform expert joined the meeting on the second day and outlined the functions of the Middlesex University online learning platform (OASIS). It was established that several members of the Steering Group were familiar with using online learning platforms in their own institutions.

    a   A key deliverable for the project envisaged in the project application is an online open access database of training materials for use by trainers in EU member states. This is to be a self-sustaining resource for continuing development beyond the life of this project. The Steering Group concluded that the establishment of this online open access databank constitutes a further project in itself, above and beyond the Building Mutual Trust project

    b   It was decided therefore that the project coordinators will seek further funding to establish a project for the execution of this specific task, on completion of the Building Mutual Trust project

**vi       In-Service Training For Legal Services Personnel In Member States**

The design of training packages for judicial personnel and other legal professionals on the effective use of LITs is to be a key deliverable for the project. The meeting also agreed that all the project's outcomes, from 'micro'level (specific items of training material, lesson plan templates) to 'macro' level (setting of common benchmarks for assessment and accreditation, course syllabi) should be informed by the perspective of users of LITs from the legal professions and national judiciaries.

 It was decided therefore that

    a   Input from the legal professions and national judiciaries of EU member states will be sought wherever possible for all of the project's activities

    b   The project will undertake the development of training courses and materials for judicial personnel and legal professionals in the effective use of LITs

**MEETING OBJECTIVE 2: EXAMINE ROUTES TO GOALS AND ENSURING DELIVERY**

i       Achievement of interim and full term objectives for the project will be managed by the project coordinators and Steering Group.

ii      Each Working Group coordinator will produce a report on the work of their group prior to full project meetings. This report should be sent to the project coordinators at least one working week prior to the date of the meeting for dissemination to all project participants.

iii    The project coordinators will maintain a central 'bank' of materials produced and ensure dissemination of materials to all project participants.

iv    The protocol for submission of materials for reviewing by other Working Group members is as follows:

    a   The author posts a document on intranet (see 8 iv) and alerts other group members by e-mail
    b   Working Group members download document, view and comment as required
    c   Reviewed versions of document are returned to the Working Group coordinator. The Working Group coordinator liaises with the document author and other Working Group members over incorporation of changes into a new document
    d   Final version of the document is sent to project coordinators by Working Group coordinators for 'banking'

v       All project participants will have access to the central bank of documents submitted, so they can view, evaluate and comment on materials produced by the project as it progresses.

vi    It was agreed that materials 'banked' by the project will not be disseminated outside of the project prior to the dissemination phase. However, training materials produced may be trialled at participating institutions or with other bodies on a selective basis.

vii   The Steering Group recognised that input into the project from participants outside of the fourteen core participants would be desirable. Ways of ensuring wider participation to ensure that the project can benefit from such input were discussed. It was concluded that:

    a   Each Working Group can invite external experts to advise and/or attend meetings as desired. Where this requires funding from the project, this must be confirmed with the project coordinators

    b   The trial use of training materials produced by the project can be used to engage institutions or professional bodies external to the project

c   The project coordinators will discuss with the funding body the possibility of reallocation of funding earmarked for the final event to allow for the invitation of key experts to each of the three full project meetings through the life of the project

viii   The function of a final meeting or seminar as found in the project proposal was discussed in detail. It was decided that a final event for the project would be desirable for two main reasons:

a   it would provide an opportunity for dissemination of the project results

b   it would provide an appropriate closure for the project and for all project participants

ix   The nature of the project's final event was discussed in detail and the following decisions taken:

a   The nomenclature of the final meeting is to be 'Symposium' rather than 'Conference'. The Symposium is to have an agenda limited to the aims of the project. It may also be possible to invite external parties to the Symposium to present their findings on the trial use of project materials in their institutions

b   An alternative location for the Symposium is to be investigated. Bratislava was suggested. The reasoning behind this is to enhance the dissemination function of the Symposium


## MEETING OBJECTIVE 3:   SET INTERIM DELIVERY DATES THROUGH LIFE OF PROJECT

i   It was decided that the activities of each working work will formally start from the closing of the first project meeting (Steering Group) on 16th May 2008.

ii   The setting of benchmark competencies for LITs in the EU is central to the design of training materials and to all aspects of the project's work. Therefore Working Group A (see meeting objective 1 i) will aim to complete its work on benchmarking for presentation to the second (full) project meeting in Antwerp on Monday 8th September 2008.

iii   All Working Groups are to produce interim reports on their progress at each of the full project meetings (see 2 ii).


## MEETING OBJECTIVE 4:  ESTABLISH AND ALLOCATE PARTICIPANTS TO WORKING GROUPS

i      In order to facilitate the coordination of the project and the achievement of its goals, the work of the project has been divided into six key deliverables (see Meeting Objective 1 i-vi). A Working Group has been established for each and the activities of each Working Group will be guided by one (or more) participants in the Steering Group.

ii     It is emphasised that the division into Working Groups is only to facilitate management of the overall project and achievement of its objectives. Participation in a particular Working Group does not preclude a project participant from contributing to the work of another Working Group. Indeed, it is hoped that all participants will wish to participate in all parts of the project and to take a view of the project 'in the round'.

iii    The initial allocation of project participants to Working Groups can also be amended according to preference. Working Groups will also be rearranged and/or re-designated through the life of the project as specific tasks are completed.

iv    The meeting constituted the Working Groups as follows:

Working Group A: Benchmarking
Erik Hertog (coordinator)
Hilary Maxwell-Hyslop
John Rees-Smith
Cynthia Giambruno

Working Group B: Training Courses
Cynthia Giambruno (coordinator)
Erik Hertog
Bodil Martinsen
Kirsten Woelch-Rasmussen

Working Group C: Training Materials
Bodil Martinsen, Kirsten Woelch-Rasmussen) Coordinators
Brooke Townsley
Cynthia Giambruno
Carmen Valero-Garcia

Working Group D: Training of Trainers
Brooke Townsley (Coordinator)
Cynthia Giambruno
Carmen Valero-Garcia

Working Group E: Supporting Resources
John Rees-Smith (Coordinator)
Annalisa Sandrelli
Teodora Ghiviriga

Inge Gorm Hansen

Working Group F: In Service Training for Legal Services

Ann Corsellis (Coordinator)
Amanda Clement
Brooke Townsley
Yolanda Vanden Bosch

## MEETING OBJECTIVE 5: DECIDE ON METHODOLOGIES FOR PRODUCTION OF MATERIALS

(See Meeting Objective 2: i – vi above)

## MEETING OBJECTIVE 6: AGREE ON PROJECT HOUSE STYLE

i       A uniform style for the formatting of materials and documents for the project was discussed. It was agreed that the issue of project style would not become significant until the actual production of materials started following the 2nd project meeting in September 2008. It was agreed, however, that some uniformity in the format of materials would be desirable from an early stage.

ii      Initially, it was decided that the default format for all project materials should be Times New Roman font, size 12.

iii     The requirement for the display of the EU Commission logo on project documents was also noted.

iv      A further issue discussed was that of copyright on materials produced by project partners. The project coordinators are to investigate copyright issues with the copyright office at Middlesex University.

## 7.     WEBSITE ARRANGEMENTS

(see Meeting Objective 1 v above)

## 8.     ADDITIONAL POINTS

i       Expenses incurred by project participants for their work on the project must be submitted to the project coordinators with the appropriate receipts attached. All expense claims should be sent to:

Brooke Townsley
Language Centre

Middlesex University
The Burroughs
Hendon NW4 4BT
London
UK

Please keep photocopies of all documentation sent.

ii      The project coordinators will seek to avoid unreasonable delay in the re-imbursement of expenses incurred by project participants in the execution of the project.

iii     It was decided that a secure intranet for communications between project participants should be established. The existing facilities on OASIS (see V above) can be used to provide this function. The project coordinators are to arrange for guest accounts to be created for all project participants and for log-in details to be sent out.

The meeting closed at 1430 on Friday 16th May.

## OBJECTIVES FOR STEERING GROUP MEETING

AGREE AND REFINE ACHIEVEABLE GOALS FOR PROJECT
Based on project outline, to specify details of tasks, size of tasks and feasibility

EXAMINE ROUTES TO GOALS AND ENSURING DELIVERY
To include arrangements for dissemination and sharing of materials, engagement of experts, record keeping arrangements

SET INTERIM DELIVERY DATES THROUGH LIFE OF PROJECT
To establish 'chunks' of work to be completed by specific deadlines

ESTABLISH AND ALLOCATE PARTICIPANTS TO WORKING GROUPS
Who will do what, how and by when

DECIDE ON METHODOLGIES FOR PRODUCTION OF MATERIALS
To include principles to be followed in production of teaching materials, training the trainer materials

AGREE ON PROJECT 'HOUSE STYLE'

WEBSITE ARRANGEMENTS
To include communications, setting up of discussion boards, arrangements for website

Project Participants contact details

Names, e-mail addresses, tel. numbers

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