Aqua-TNET II
WP5/8 workgroup conference
20 April 2010 – Using Skype

Meeting Notes:

Participating: Mike Moulton (MM), John Bostock (JB), Jean Dhont (JD), Bernd Ueberschaer (BU), Juhani Pirhonen (JP), Jouni Heikkinen (JH), Ryan Kaye (RK) Christophe Jacobs (CJ) and Sonia Seixas (SS). Apologies were received from Clive Dove (CD) and Goncalo Santos (GS).

Note: This online meeting was called due to the cancellation of the planned core group meeting in Madrid due to the grounding of most European flights over the weekend.

Online guide

MM invited updates and questions on the development of materials for the online guide and helpdesk.

BU – nearly finished article on the use of video, will have a draft later today

JD – has previously prepared the section on images, needs some updating for FAQ

RK – has uploaded a draft on wikis and could do one on blogs

JB – has uploaded a draft on social bookmarking and is planning one on project management

MM – has uploaded a draft on plagiarism and one on copyright and open educational resources

JP – has uploaded a draft on using Doodle for scheduling

CD – has uploaded demonstration podcasts

JH – has worked on a presentation of SlideShare and he will upload it shortly.

SS and GS were not available during the discussion.

The concept of using a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) as the main component of the helpdesk and as a table of contents for the guide was agreed. JB suggested the FAQs generated so far could be extracted into a single document so as to give a better over-view and help develop a consistent style.

Further discussion identified some additional topics that should be covered:

- Learning management systems – there are so many different systems that it is difficult to give very specific guidance, but can provide some general information

- Games and simulations – these were flagged in the survey as top things that teachers would like to learn more about. Possibly something that we can develop in later stages of the project, e.g. by involving industry. There are potentially some examples that could go into the guide now. JB to follow-up and develop material

- CJ noted that there is a desire for more learning about PowerPoint – MM suggested that the section in the TACCLE manual could be used or adapted.

- BU suggested that we have a section on Voice over IP (VOIP) in general and specifically the use of Skype.

JD reaffirmed that each of us is allowed, even invited, to find inspiration or use information from the similar TACCLE guide, providing such use is acknowledged and referenced. It is welcomed as dissemination and cross-fertilisation between EU projects.

Online Survey

CJ provided a brief overview of the results of the survey. It was noted that majority of teacher respondents were male with an average age of 44. Overall there appears to be little use at present of new social media or awareness of opportunities.

For students there is a big difference between what they are using in home context and for college. However, CJ advised that it did not follow that if students were using social media with friends and family that they would effectively use the tools in education. It may need different approaches and even tools. Students were not very happy with training they have received in the use of new technologies, although they had cautious confidence in their abilities.

One constraint for teachers and students is that they have not seen many of the new tools used, or at least used to good effect. More case study/evidence is needed. Thee is also the problem that staff are very busy and do not have the time to develop new approaches and new materials.

CJ noted that teachers need a different allocation of time if using hybrid learning; invest more time in responding to questions and providing feedback than on preparation of materials and presentations. Students are also not used to the new way of teaching – they need to learn new learning styles and move from passive to active learning.

MM noted that that new approaches to active and collaborative learning can also be used to reduce possibilities of plagiarism.

Next meetings

The planned meeting in Madrid had been postponed by one week to 26-27th April. However, after reviewing members' experiences and progress in re-booking flights, the number of people still available to meet and the ongoing uncertainty regarding air travel it was decided that efforts would be better put towards achieving the objectives of the workgroup rather than spending more time on travel arrangements. The April meeting was therefore cancelled. Members should attempt to recover all expenses already paid directly from the companies concerned (e.g. airlines) or by way of insurance policies where covered. Any problems in recovering expenses should be brought to the attention of the project coordinator as soon as possible.

Member's availability during May was reviewed and it was agreed that a full meeting was not possible and that the best option would be to add a day to the annual event at the start of June. JB will follow this up with the secretariat and check members' date availability.

MM suggested it would be very useful to meet with the Aqua-tnet web programmer concerning the implementation of the help desk and online guide. MM will discuss this further with AquaTT, particularly if a small meeting might be possible in May.

MM and JB thanked all participants for their contributions and efforts to date.