

MINUTES
of the kick-off meeting
TEMPUS grant
145021-TEMPUS-2008-UK-JPCR
'New Masters Programme on Library and Information Science'

The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen
18-20 February, 2009

Present:

Alan Hopkinson –Middlesex University, London (project contractor)
Charles Strouthos –Middlesex University, London (project administrator)
Tigran Zargaryan –Fundamental Scientific Library, Yerevan (project coordinator)
Albert Sargsyan –International Scientific Educational Centre, Yerevan
Irakli Garibashvili - Ilia Chavchavadze State University, Tbilisi
Ingulina Loria - Georgian Library Association, Tbilisi
Ingars Gusans - Rezekne Higher Education Institution, Rezekne
Ángel Borrego - University of Barcelona
Marat Rakhmatullaev –Tashkent Institute of Culture, Tashkent
Shukhrat Kayumov –Tashkent University of Information Technology, Tashkent
Peter Reid – the Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen
Simon Burnett – the Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen
Kārlis Počs - Rezekne Higher Education Institution, Rezekne
Arusyak Harutunyan - International Scientific Educational Centre, Yerevan (interpreter)

Agenda

- 1. Opening of Meeting**
 - a) Welcome from RGU
 - b) Adoption of agenda
 - c) Appointment of chair and secretary
- 2. Presentation: Alan Hopkinson: History of the project and the role of Middlesex**
- 3. Walk through of documentation including Workplan**
- 4. Presentations of participating organizations**
 - a) the Robert Gordon University
 - b) University of Parma
 - c) University of Barcelona
 - d) Rezekne Institute of Higher Education
 - e) Fundamental Scientific library, NAS RA
 - f) International Scientific Education Centre
 - g) Ilia Chavchavadze State University
 - h) Georgian Library Association
 - i) Tashkent Institute of Culture
 - j) Tashkent University of Information Technologies
- 5. Administrative regulations and procedures**
(travel, per diem, refunds, purchasing equipment)
- 6. Adoption of Workplan and Allocation of Project Tasks**
- 7. Visit to RGU department of Information Management**
- 8. Allocation and dates of tasks for 2009**
- 9. Project administration tools**
 - a) Website
 - b) Project handbook
 - c) Communications (e-mail, Web2.0 tools, etc.)
- 10. Closure**
 - a) Any other business
 - b) Date of next meeting

The Tempus Project representatives' kick-off meeting was organised to discuss activities proposed in the project, to detail possible ways for successful implementation of LIS curricula in the partner country universities, to plan the exact dates of meetings for the year 2009 and beyond, to work out issues of a Working Plan, concerning realization of JEP 145021-TEMPUS-2008-UK-JPCR.

February 18 meeting.

Alan Hopkinson welcomed all participants, wishing productive work. He reported that Professor Anna Maria Tamarro (University of Parma) could not participate, and sent her apologies. Professor Ian Johnson (the Robert Gordon University) due to illness will not be able to attend the Meeting. Alan introduced Charles Strouthos as manager for administrative and financial details, and Jean Dey as the person responsible for Aberdeen meeting and accommodation (Item 1.a). Richard Newton on behalf of RGU welcomed participants and introduced the activities of the RGU Business School. He mentioned that the kick-off meeting was critical in getting the activities started, and it is very important to have productive discussions (issue 1.a). The kick-off meeting agenda prepared by Alan Hopkinson was adopted by all participants without changes and additions (Item 1.b). Alan Hopkinson and Tigran Zargaryan were adopted as Chair and Secretary respectively (Item 1.c). After that participants started discussions on meeting agenda topics.

Item 2. Alan presented the history of the project and the role of Middlesex University. It began with the UBCIM Tbilisi workshop (October 1999), which was a regional workshop with participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Later (2002-2004), an EU Tempus JEP project started in Serbia on building a cooperative cataloguing system. Middlesex University participated in this project, and Middlesex was involved in the project. During the IFLA Berlin Conference (2003) Alan gave a poster session on the Serbian project and Tigran who as a representative from Yerevan State University was attending the Conference, suggested doing one with Middlesex for Armenia. Since YSU already had a catalogue, it was decided to concentrate on Virtual Learning Environment and Electronic Resource provision. During IFLA in Berlin, a meeting of Alan and Tigran with Monika Segbert resulted in an introduction to Hanover State University as a partner (the library is the National Library for Science and Technology) and in provision of electronic resources.

Alan and Tigran had developed a new project 'Building Digital Educational Services and Content Creation Centre in Yerevan State University'. From Tempus, funding was granted for 2 years (2004-2006). Dissemination included a talk at ELAG at Barcelona.

The final international Conference was held in Yerevan, and the main conclusion was that librarians in Armenia and Georgia need to be better trained to implement digital library modules. At that time Marat Rakhmatullaev from Uzbekistan was awarded an EU Tempus Individual Mobility Grant to visit Middlesex, but due to some circumstances he never came and so this was the first time they had met.

The role of RGU: Professor Ian Johnson (experienced in projects in the Middle East and Latin America) appealed for assistance in a Tempus Project for Syria to implement library automation. Middlesex answered the call and participated. The project was awarded as a structural measure, one year to be completed in 2006 but postponed to 2008. At this point a good international team was already established with well formulated needs analyses. Alan and Tigran worked on proposal for LIS education based on an earlier submission of RGU for business studies. Preference was given to multi-country project, including Armenia, Georgia and Uzbekistan since we knew people in those countries. The University of Parma was recommended by Ian Johnson. The University of Barcelona was recruited at the ELAG conference. The Rezekne Higher Education Institute was recruited by Tigran. As an expert, Monika Segbert manager of various EU funded projects was appointed. Tony Olden and Stephen Roberts from Thames Valley University (London), known to Middlesex and RGU, will provide backup where necessary.

Professor Kārlis Počs raised a question to explain in more detail the role of Rezekne HEI as a partner for the archival studies. Alan answered that archives are one of base stones for civil society, and education in archives is very important for the partner country students and specialists. It had been included in the bid to make it more attractive for funding since it brings in other aspects of the European Union mission, for example development of civil society.

Ángel Borrego (University of Barcelona) replied that they also can provide good support for archives, as they have curricula on archival studies.

Tigran mentioned that in Armenia no special curriculum is yet in place for archival studies.

Shukhrat mentioned that in Uzbekistan they have archives studies, but existing curricula must be improved.

Alan mentioned that electronic libraries and archives as holders of electronic resources are becoming similar, and people trained in electronic libraries can assist also in archives. As a final remark he added that the British Library, as archival sources, has digitised a large amount of newspapers. This kind of material seems to span the divide between libraries and archives.

There were no questions and comments regarding Item 2.

Item 3. Alan presented the set of documents that had been submitted to the EU and went through it section by section. Alan also presented a VAT document from European Commission that enables participants to gain from tax exemption when purchasing equipment. Alan mentioned that partner country representatives must take care not to pay VAT for the goods and equipment being purchased in the framework of NMPLIS project. Alan mentioned that Shukrat will replace Madjit Karimov, and mentioned that he will inform EU about this change. Ian Johnson will be replaced by Peter Reid (this was later during the course of the meeting changed to Simon Burnett). After that Alan introduced all the sections of the project, with explanations and answered the participants' questions. Consortium members started to study JEP Logical Framework Matrix (LFM), Outcome/Output and Activity tables. The Consortium member examined LFM and its components (objectives, indicators of progress, how indicators will be measured, assumptions and risks), and proposed activities and inputs for each Outcome/Output. The corresponding Workplan of the JEP was analyzed.

Some explanations were provided about Dissemination. The structure of 'Outcome/Output and Activity tables' were explained.

Alan mentioned that the budget of the grant is reduced. As an addition Charles informed the meeting from which budget lines this reduction is done though it was not clear in detail what had been cut.

Alan mentioned that one of the EU requirements is that 5% co financing must be done from participant institutions. He pointed out the ways that it had been planned to achieve this, for example, providing staff time free-of-charge.

It was suggested to use a document sharing system for producing collective documents.

The meeting went through the activities. The JEP document reference numbers are used below.

Activity 1. Marat asked how IELTS will be organized. Alan replied that Middlesex specialists will visit partner country institutions for these purposes. Peter asked how realistic is to test within 5 days (activity 1.4) academic staff. Alan told that he will check this with the Middlesex specialists.

Albert asked about the acceptable grade for IELTS. Peter replied that it must be 6.5 (for the 9 grading system).

Activity 2. The issue which must be discussed is how to involve EU partners in this activity. Who does what? Special attention must be paid to 2.1- attendance on masters course. Tigran mentioned that for all PC organizations staff and student involvement is done on an equal basis.

Activity 3. Some discussion took place on equipment. Tigran reported on his past experience on organizing tenders, including EU Tempus JEP for Yerevan State University.

Activity 4. Introducing how the Virtual Learning Environment must be implemented.

Activity 6. Dissemination. Tigran reported that the project web site is already up and running. Another important event for dissemination will be a final conference in Uzbekistan, to be held together with a management meeting. Alan reported that for dissemination purposes he will attend the Crimea annual conference. Beside this Alan and Tigran will attend IFLA 2009 annual conference in Milan, and Tigran has already submitted an application for a poster presentation.

Some aspects for Sustainability and Quality control were discussed. Expert visits are planned for these purposes (activity 8.2).

Activity 9. Management meetings. Alan mentioned that we must think about compiling the project handbook, and whether it would be good to include this document (when ready) in the project web site so long as it was possible to make it private. Alan informed that the Uzbekistan Tempus Office representative had suggested adding a representative from Uzbekistan for the Brussels meeting and that the EU have agreed this.

Then the project costs (table 8, page 85) were examined. Alan mentioned that it was not possible to say anything concrete about the current status on project costs just for now, because of the reduction of the project money. He will inform Consortium about the exact project budget after the Brussels meeting.

Item 4. Presentations.

a) The Robert Gordon University. Peter Reid and Simon Burnett presented the situation with LIS education in RGU. They mentioned that the Aberdeen Business School is involved in different Tempus

projects, one is in Kazakhstan for Kazakh business schools. They mentioned that the RGU Business School is offering MSc. qualifications, Ph.D. qualifications. As a Virtual Learning Environment RGU is using Moodle.

In terms of research, three main themes, Information Literacy, Information and Society, Knowledge Management are carried out. Continuing professional development for librarians also is available.

b) University of Parma. Not presented.

c) University of Barcelona. Angel Borrego mentioned that the University is very old (more than 500 years). The main goal of the LIS faculty is to educate people to be able to work in any kind of library (school, public, university, and private) and archives. Currently the faculty is about to introduce a new undergraduate degree. He mentioned that their LIS graduates have a good employment rate. Also 2 MSc. programmes on digital content management and school libraries and reading promotion are provided. The faculty uses Moodle as a Virtual Learning Environment, but they do not provide distance learning degrees on the basis that a university requires the presence of its students to foster the acquisition of knowledge. Teaching is done in Catalan and Castilian as the lecturer chooses.

d) Rezekne Higher Education Institution. Professor Počs mentioned that the University is a state HE institution established in 1993, and is one of the youngest in Latvia. In 4 faculties 39 programmes are taught. One of those is a professional MSc. programme 'Archives Studies'. Professor Počs introduced the programmes, volume of study, duration of studies, and ways of achieving this. He described the modules and the qualitative structure of the programmes, as well as the fields of academic scientific work.

e) Fundamental Scientific Library. Tigran introduced the library and mentioned that the library is a leader in Armenia in digitisation activities. He introduced 4 international programmes where FSL is participating, and mentioned that these programmes will have a big impact on building digital libraries in Armenia. To be successful in these and other similar tasks, it is important to have a critical mass of educated librarians. Because of that modern LIS curricula based on European partner Universities experience are important for FSL.

f) International Scientific Educational Centre. Arusyak presented ISEC on behalf of Albert. She informed that ISEC is having more than 650 MSc. students, and 430 PH.D students. She introduced the faculties, study programmes and mentioned that subjects are being taught in Armenia, English and Russian. She informed that for introducing and implementing new LIS curricula a new specialisation will be opened in ISEC.

g) Iliia Chavchavadze State University. Irakli reported that the University has 8 faculties (Physics, Mathematics, Sociology, Philosophy, Humanities, Life Sciences, Earth Sciences, and Foreign Languages) and was founded in 2006. Irakli described the higher educational system in Georgia and mentioned that many programmes are based on Western standards and values. In detail he introduced the current state in LIS education in Georgia. He mentioned that only Bachelors studies for LIS are available but still nothing for the MSc. The NMPLIS will help Georgia HE system to solve this problem.

h) Georgian Library Association. Irakli and Ingulina introduced GeLA. It was founded in 2000, and has about 100 members. The Association has a training centre where lifelong learning activities are being carried out. These are 2 week programmes on modern trends in LIS, and library management. Also GeLA is organising 2-3 days specific courses. GeLA is participating in quality management for state accreditation of various courses. As a learning platform GeLA is using Moodle. Also 3 Universities have already an experience on using Moodle and the Moodle system has been localised into Georgian.

i) Tashkent Institute of Culture. Marat presented the importance of the project for Uzbekistan. There are around 14,000 libraries, and more than 20,000 librarians need to improve their knowledge. TIC was founded in 1974, the LIS faculty has 3 chairs: Mathematics and Informatics; Bibliography and Documentary Studies; Library Science. The libraries in Uzbekistan need more than 100 MSc. degree librarians each year.

j) Tashkent University of Information Technologies. Shukhrat presented TUIT activities using video presentation.

The Chair asked for more questions and comments. As there were none, the first meeting day was concluded.

February 19 meeting.

Item 5. Alan introduced the administrative regulations and procedures. He informed that EU Tempus has approved a project with revised costs. He presented the table with the revised costs. Then he introduced the document named Tempus grant agreement. He stressed that for financial reporting purposes

for the Commission, air ticket stubs and the boarding tickets must be presented. The Commission pays per diems for accommodation and local fares. Tigran mentioned that for the correct conversion of currencies EU Tempus is suggesting a table 'Monthly accounting rate of the euro', which could be found at: <http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/index.cfm?fuseaction=home&SearchField=&Period=2005-10&Delim=&Language=en>

Alan mentioned that per diems we pay in cash for partner country participants. For EU participants we will do transfers. Charles mentioned that for project administration needs each participant must present individual travel forms. This form 'INDIVIDUAL GRANT HOLDER REPORT for Travel and Costs of stay' could be found at p.65 of Tempus Grant Agreement. Alan in details explained the construction of this form. Alan also explained 'Convention for staff costs' table at the page 64. He stressed that for each country 'Staff Costs - Maximum eligible daily rates' are indicated on the pages 66 and 67. Charles mentioned that he will try to help the participants on booking the tickets if they are facing some problems, and suggested to contact the project management team at Middlesex in case of need.

Item 6. Alan suggested to examine activities 2.1 and 2.2 once more. He suggested to change the starting dates for 2.2 to M16 or M17. Ángel suggested to start this activity on June, but RGU academic staff replied that June is the examination period so June is not a very convenient time for visits of EU academics. Peter and Simon mentioned that firstly the needs assessment must be done and we must be careful on the selection of topics. Alan mentioned that needs assessment is very important and training must happen after that. Peter asked what will happen if academics selected to visiting UK for training were not able to reach IELTS 6.5 grade. Peter also mentioned that delivery of 10 modules with 10 days each is not realistic. Alan added that we must add also the archives studies. Shukhrat suggested using some VLE possibilities for delivering 10 modules. Alan said that these 10 days were supplementary to the training in EU institutions. Alan suggested to discuss 2.1, which starts on October 2009 later. During discussion Peter mentioned that we must know what the students want to do. This should become more evident during the needs assessment. At a meeting in January 2009 Alan with RGU staff had discussed how PC visitors could be involved in RGU courses. We can enrol the visitors on the Masters programme and they will earn a diploma from RGU, if they successfully finish the courses and assignments. This will be a post graduate diploma. If any of the PC staff will want to do research after 8 modules this must be negotiated separately. Peter's advice was to encourage PC staff to participate in the courses, as the cost of participation would normally be about 7,000 Euro. This is being offered free-of-charge with RGU getting for 15 staff around the same as they would get from one international student. Simon mentioned that RGU courses are purely the library modules without archives studies. Alan noted that TEMPUS projects never include student fees but only token payments per student which the receiving institutions will gain. Ángel mentioned that the University of Barcelona cannot easily accommodate the student to UoB LIS courses. Even for students who knew Spanish, there is the problem that courses may be taught in Catalan. He mentioned that their degrees are similar to RGU, though the courses are not so expensive. His final recommendation was for students to participate in RGU's courses. They could more easily participate in Activity 2.2, training in the PCs. Alan asked whether UoB can be involved in Archives studies, and Angel replied positively. Ángel recommended the records management discipline. Počs mentioned that Rezekne HEI also have several courses on Archives Studies. As a conclusion to these discussions all participants agreed that firstly the needs assessment must be done. Simon suggested that the needs assessment must be done by the academics from RGU, UoB and Rezekne. Alan mentioned that according to the 'Output/Outcome and Activity Tables' needs assessment for curricular development is under Sub. Ref 1.1 and needs assessment for ICT infrastructure is under Sub. Ref. 1.2. He suggested to organize both visits together. After discussions on possible visit dates it was agreed that 4 EU staff will visit Armenia, Georgia and Uzbekistan starting from March 30, 2009. Tigran with Alan will check all possible flights, visa regulations and will report back to the Consortium members by email about the findings. Alan suggested he would talk with Anna-Maria on this topic.

Activity 3.1. It was decided that the tender documents before publishing must be presented to Charles for final approval.

Activity 3.2. Alan once more stressed the fact that Tempus projects are free of VAT.

Activity 3.3. Alan and Tigran told about their past experience on training library staff in the use and promotion of e-resources.

Activity 3.4. It was agreed that Middlesex will coordinate the purchase and tender.

Activity 4. Nothing for the first year, will discuss later. No comments.

Activity 5. Decided to not discuss at this moment, as quality assurance is for second year. No questions and comments.

Activity 6.1. Alan mentioned that this will be discussed during the February 20 presentation. Tigran mentioned that FSL will be in charge for this during the whole project life time.

Activity 6.2. Uzbekistan will undertake this activity and they will be in charge for it. It was decided that during the Brussels meeting they will check for what amounts the tenders must be published in the newspaper, and how to proceed with price quotations.

Activity 6.3. Alan and Tigran will participate in IFLA Milan for 2009. Alan will go to Crimea 2010.

Activity 7. No comments.

Activity 8.1. Alan and Tigran will check how other PC partners can participate in the Inter-Tempus coaching workshop which is currently down for Armenia.

Activity 8.2. Alan mentioned that he had invited external expert Monika for participation in the kick off meeting. She has informed him that she could not be present, and Alan will send Monika the Minutes.

Activity 9.3. It was decided that the next coordination meeting in Armenia must be moved forward (M10 is too late). It was decided to hold that 3 day meeting starting on June 30th.

Activity 9.4 Alan reported that the EU has allowed adding a person from Uzbekistan for the Brussels meeting.

Item 7. After lunch, Simon and Peter organized a tour for the participants. Then Peter introduced online learning courses in LIS, Information management. He answered the questions of the participants.

February 20 meeting.

Item 8. Alan opened the meeting. He informed that in a range of the Tempus JEP 25224-2004 led by RGU in Kazakhstan during 2005-2007 RGU has trained 5 people using IELTS tests. Alan informed that he has discussed the details of using IELTS with the Middlesex specialists who expect to be organising training sessions. So Alan suggested selecting 5 people per partner country for participating in IELTS. Irakli and Marat suggested involving local British Council staff in this activity.

Peter suggested that it will be useful for one trainer to go to one of the PC countries, and all other PC participants to go that country so the trainer would be handling 20 day training sessions for all of them. Partner country representatives till the end of March must decide and update Alan who will participate from each country in IELTS courses. After discussion it was suggested that each PC participant takes self tests and training in their countries and somebody from Middlesex travels to each country (May or June 2009), and checks the level of English language knowledge and gives advice on how to take the exam.

Peter informed that the lecturers who go to RGU will participate in the course for 6 weeks starting from October 2009, and starting from the last weekend of January 2010.

Ángel remarked that as according to the project only one student should visit Barcelona, this could create some problems. Peter reacted that RGU is willing and is ready to take as many students as possible. Peter also reported that RGU cannot easily participate in the activity 2.2 'Training in partner countries', and suggested that other EU universities to undertake this activity.

Another question was how many PC participants from each country will travel to each EU University. Alan said that the current TEMPUS application procedure requires too much to be made specific in advance, for example from this year it was to be made specific how much funding was spent by each institution and how many mobilities were made to and received by each institution. It was clearly not possible to be so specific in a project particularly one in which there were so many participants without a meeting and there was no possibility of getting funding for a meeting to plan a TEMPUS project in advance. This contrasted with EU FP7 where a proposal was made and only when the Commission accepted one did a meeting take place when funding was secured which decided definitely the participants responsibilities. In our case the issue of who does exactly what will be decided after the needs assessment provided by EU University specialists.

Item 9. Tigran presented the project web site (<http://www.flib.sci.am/eng/Tempus/>), informed that this work is a contribution 'in kind' from FSL, and that FSL will continue maintenance of the web page during the project life time. Alan and Shukhrat mentioned that some contact data of the participants provided in the Web site must be changed, such as new members involved in the project, and this must be reflected on the project Web site. Tigran suggested some Web2.0 tools to be used as a communication means during the project realization life time. He mentioned that we must select free/open source solutions wherever possible. It was decided to use Google Docs for document sharing, Google Slideshare for online

presentations, Survey Monkey for online surveys, Mahara software for open source ePortfolios, and Facebook for creating social networks.

Shukhrat asked for more information regarding Facebook. Peter demonstrated in details how Facebook is working, and it was decided to use this tool during the project life time. Peter informed that will open NMPLIS social network in the Facebook, and will invite Consortium members to participate in this. Tigran will control Google Docs.

Wiki Docs FOSS was suggested as a tool for creating the project handbook.

Item 10. Alan expressed on behalf of all participants gratitude to colleagues from RGU for hosting this meeting and the excellent organisation.

Simon added that the sooner we decide who the 15 students will be, the better for the project. So everyone must start thinking about this. The latest date to present the lists is the end of the March 2009.

It was decided that the next 3 day meeting will be held in Yerevan, 30 June – 2 July.

It was suggested that Alan will contact Anna-Maria Tammaro and will inform her about the discussions.

Chair

Alan Hopkinson

Secretary

Tigran Zargaryan