EFFICIENT INTERACTIVE TOOLS FOR CONTINUOUS EDUCATION INFORMATION EXTENSION

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Abstract. This paper is part of the dissemination activities of the project “Quality Management Network for CEECs (Central And East European Countries)” in the frame of Leonardo da Vinci Programme, Community action programme on vocational training, Procedure B, Second phase: 2000–2006, agreement no. RO/03/B/F/NT 175064.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of the project is to establish a core group of CEECs’ food industries (a Network of Vocational Education and Training Centres) where capability can be built up to undertake safety and hygiene at EU standards in the improvement of current food technologies and to introduce EU quality systems into the CEECs’ food industries during the enlargement and integration process because these are essential for the survival and growth of the CEECs’ food industry in the EU environment following accession.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A very important outcome of the project will be a portal: www.idec.gr/quamanceec with a communication platform for the partners involved in the network and also a training platform that will be supported by the information given in a Manual of Good Practices for Agrifood Sector.

We’ll present here some of the main functions of the training platform:

Login / logout

Every time you go back to the internet campus of your institution, you will need to enter username and password. Depending on your institution security choices, you have defined username and password yourself at self registration (and received an email to remind you) or you have been informed of username/password by your administration.
Administering a webcourse

From the 'My course's menu (i.e. after you are logged in the system and have already created a course website)

- Click on the title of the course that you wish to administer
  The course main page contains all the features visible to the students, but there are more options available, and two additional sections to this screen.
  If you see course from student point of view (i.e. you see course home page but are not offered to edit, modify, deactivate or delete its content), then the login you entered is not a valid teacher login. A solution to this may be to self-register once again and inform your system administrator that your ancient login can be deleted.
  At the top of the screen is the introduction text for the course.
- Click on Modify to alter the text that is displayed
- Edit/Add text, then click 'Ok' to update the introduction text
- N.B. It is possible to add styles, e.g. <b>This is bold</b> or any HTML tags.
- Links beginning with 'http://' and email addresses containing the '@' will be automatically clickable.
- Click on 'Delete' to remove the introduction text for the course.
To add an agenda item

- Select the correct Day from the drop down menu
- Select the correct Month from the drop down menu
- Select the correct Year from the drop down menu
- Select the correct Hour from the drop down menu
- Select the correct Minute from the drop down menu
- Enter a duration for the agenda item (optional)
- Enter a title for the agenda item
- Enter details for the agenda item
- Click on Ok

The new item will appear in the list of agenda items

To modify an agenda item

- Click on the Modify link next to the agenda item to be changed
- Amend the details displayed as required
- Click on Ok to accept changes

To delete an agenda item

- Click on the Delete link next to the agenda item to be removed
- N.B. No confirmation is requested, so delete with care!!!
Documents

This section provides a comprehensive mechanism for organizing files that you would like to make available to the students. It is possible to make many directories, and to have directories within directories to enable grouping of files.

It is possible to
- Delete
- Move
- Rename
- Add a comment
- Or stop students seeing files

Announcements

To add an announcement
- Enter text into the box
- Check 'Send this announcement by email to registered students' box if needed
- Click on 'Ok'

To Modify an existing announcement
- Click on Modify immediately below the announcement you wish to change
- Correct the announcement text
- Click on 'Ok'

To Delete an existing announcement
- Click on 'Delete' immediately below the announcement you wish to delete.
- N.B. No confirmation is required – take care!

Links

To add a link
- Enter the URL for the link, e.g. http://www.google.com/
- Enter the name for the link (will be used to make the link)
- Enter a description of the material at the linked destination
- Click on Ok

To delete the whole list

- Check the Delete the whole list box
- Click on Ok
- N.B. No confirmation is required – use with care!!!

Student Papers

There’s not too much that can be modified here, other than the instructions to be given to the students. This area is likely to be modified in future upgrades, but at present it allows students to upload documents that everyone can see, future releases will offer the option to only allow the sender and the admin to see them, i.e. it could be used for work submission (assignments).

To modify the instructions to the students

- Click on Modify
- Change the text in the box
- Click on the Ok button immediately below the text box that you’ve just altered.

To delete the instructions

- Click on Delete
- N.B. No confirmation is requested – take care with this option!

Users

This is the section where you can control who is registered on your course
You can add students (but it is easier for everybody to have them self-register otherwise you will need to inform them one by one of their username/password and there is a risk of double registration of the same person)

To add a student

- Click Add student
Fill personal data with correct email so that he/she receives username/password

Validate

To delete a student, click on 'Unregister'. The student will remain in your campus main database, but he/she will not be associated with your course anymore.

You cannot modify student settings like name or password because it is up to them to know who they are and correct their own profile.

Users tool is tightly connected to Groups tool for obvious reasons (groups are users groups). However, you will be allowed to create empty groups if your students are not registered yet. This way, you can organise the structure of your course before beginning of it. See Groups.

Groups

You can create groups of students. A group is a collection of students sharing the same forum and/or the same documents upload area. To create groups:

- Select Create New Group(s)
- Enter values (maximum is not necessary and can be empty, but then you will not be able to fill groups randomly as everybody will be registered in the first group whose size is unlimited)
- Click on Create to validate
- Then select Modify settings to determine
  - whether students can self-register in groups or if you prefer manual or random filling
  - whether groups receive a forum, a documents upload area or both
  - whether forums are private (only for group members) or public (any other student can read and write)
- Validate

If needed and if your users list is not empty, you can now fill groups automatically by random or edit every group one by one to enter users one by one. This manual editing can also be done after automatic filling or self-registering to fine tune group composition, check who is where and so on, move one specific student, etc.

Exercises
This is a quiz generator. Allowing the generation of multiple choice tests. These are formative however, as the system is not sufficiently secure to ensure the test responder is the account holder.

To create an Exercise

- Enter a name for the exercise in the box
- Click on Ok
- Enter a subtitle if necessary
- Enter the question that you wish to ask
- Enter a description
  By default you are only given 2 possible answers (True/False)
  **If you wish to have more possible answers then**
- Press +Answ for each additional answer you require
  **If you wish the reduce the amount of possible answers then**
- Press –Answ for each answer to be removed
- Place a tick in the checkbox for the correct answer
- In the answer column Enter the text for the possible answers to the questions
- In the comment column Enter feedback that is given if a student selects that answer.
- Click on Save Exercise (if you’ve completed the exercise) OR Save Question
  After saving the exercise you can adjust the scoring mechanism. The default values should be adequate, but you can modify them, then validate.

The principle of this scoring table is to define proper weight to number of good answers by question. For instance, if you have a question with 4 answers (possibly more than one right) and the student has two wrong and two right, you can give him half of the points, but you can also decide that this is not satisfactory and give, for instance, maximum points (20) if everything is right and zero points in any other combination.

**Course Information**

This option allows you to modify course details, together with deleting the whole course and controlling access to the course.

Alter the

- Course code
- Professor (Lecturers)
- Course title
- Faculty
- ... as require
- Change the confidentiality of the course:
  - Public access = anybody can visit your website without even registering or logging in. And it is linked on your campus Home Page.
  - Private access, registration open = people need to register and log in before entering
your website, but anybody can register through your campus self-registration system.

- Private access, registration closed = only people already registered have access to course website.

Tip: to have students self-register but eliminate possible intruders. Open self-registration during one week, invite your students to self-register, then close self-registration, go to users list and eliminate people who have not been invited.

- Select the language that you wish the pages to be displayed in (uploaded files will need to be translated).
- Click 'Ok'
- Follow the appropriate link

**If you wish to delete the entire course**

- Click on the Delete the whole course website link

**If you really do want to delete the entire site**

- Click YES

**Otherwise**

- Click NO

Take care as there are no second chances with this option.

**Activate / Deactivate course components**

Active course components appear in colour in the upper portion of the course home page with the link Deactivate below them

Deactivated components appear in grey in the lower portion of the course home page with the link Activate below them

- Activated components are seen by students
- Deactivated components are invisible to students

It is up to individual lecturing staff to decide which course components are required for each course.

**CONCLUSIONS**

This project is designed to promote good practices and provide opportunities for dissemination on planning, implementation, evaluation and assessment, review and methodology of the project. This platform developed can be a good field of disseminating both projects and results, and helps in the sharing of knowledge and practices. In addition, this project provides the opportunity to highlight quality features in thematic LdV projects.