

Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) in Higher Education: a proposal for developing a quality evaluation framework

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framework background

The use of the Internet rapidly increased and HE practices did not follow this change:

- Technology in HE is mainly used in indirect activities (Stensaker, Maassen, Borgan, Oftebro, & Karseth, 2007).
- HE institutions have to change to adapt to: educational national and European policies (for example virtual mobility); understanding the best ways to integrate ICT in T&L practices (Lea, Clayton, Draude, Manager, & Barlow, 2001).

Why to evaluate the impact of ICT (Miller, 1984; Scheerens, 2003)?

- render the practitioners accountable for their T&L practices
- formally regulate the quality of educational results and to promote the enhancement of its quality
- evaluate the impact of a innovation or a change in a teaching strategy
- ...

Evaluation

Quality
assurance

Certification

Recognition

research overview

Lack of research related with the evaluation of the use of ICT in HE T&L practices, in what regards:

- the definition of quality standards in TEL
- the existence of holistic models for evaluating the impact of ICT use
- the existence of models that can be used to enhance the learning experience (Jara & Mellar, 2010).

This loophole justifies the study we are conducting, which has the following **objectives**:

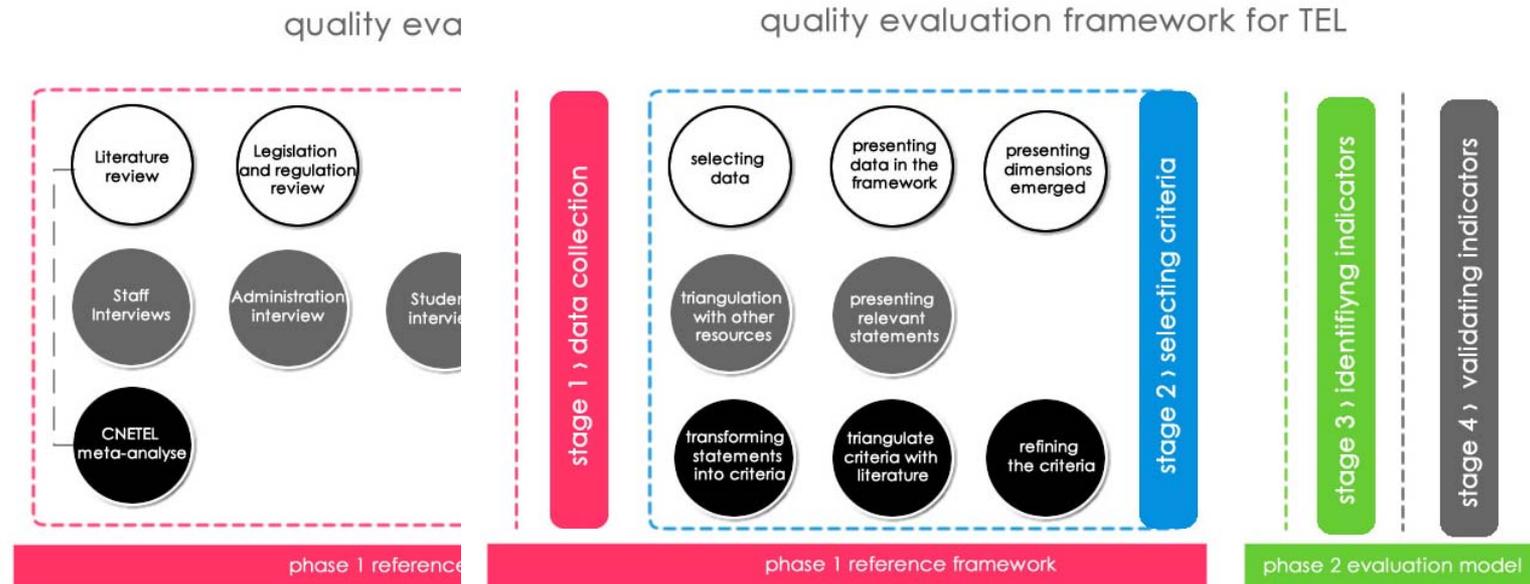
- to design a **reference framework** about the quality on TEL in Higher Education
- to develop and validate an **evaluation model** that will allow practitioners and researchers to evaluate and monitor TEL practices in HE.

Reference Framework ≠ Evaluation Model

- The *Reference Framework* is opened to researchers and practitioners and allows other users to develop their own model upon this framework.
- The *Evaluation Model* will be directed towards a specific context and reality.

research method – the reference framework process

- The **Reference Framework** allows contextualisation, transparency and data triangulation while involving all stakeholders in the process (Reis & Alves, 2009). We distance ourselves from the role of the evaluator by focusing on the process of developing sustained and contextualized knowledge in a dialectic process where all actors contribute with their input (Figari, 1994).
- According to Alves (2001) the design process of the **Reference Framework** allows to: find and/or develop references, diagnose, define evaluation dimensions and justify the chosen criteria.



Results and criteria emerged

Five dimensions to evaluate TEL were retrieved: (i) Expectations and perceptions from stakeholders (ii) Competences needed, (iii) T&L strategies and practices (iv) Learning environment and learning resources and (v) Logistics and support.

Examples of the **quality statements** retrieved from data collection stage

1. Teachers must make provision for different students' profiles
2. Teachers have to promote active learning
3. Teachers have to understand existing needs and limitations of each student
4. Teachers and students must have skills to communicate online
5. Students online participation must be assessed

Example of **criteria** that can be retrieved from the quality statements.

- (1, 3) Adequacy of teachers strategies to students diversity (T&L strategies and practices)
- (2) Promotion of active learning (T&L strategies and practices)
- (4) Competences to communicate mediated by ICT (Competences)
- (5) Competences for integrating ICT into T&L and assessment strategies (Competences)

integrating this framework in virtual mobility

*Virtual mobility offers the students the possibility of taking a course in another country through the use of ICTs, apart from obtaining the credits granted by the host universities and acquire specific skills of the subject selected, the students will obtain important **academic skills** such as: **knowing other cultures, language, different education systems and acquisition of technological skills, etc. without travelling to the host University** (Teacamp, 2011).*

Possible criteria:

- Integration of the cultural dimension;
- Make provision of language diversity;
- Adequacy of T&L practices in a virtual mobility environment
- Communication effectiveness;

In conclusion

This *Framework*, and the criteria within, have a characteristic of openness that comprises being capable of adapting to different contexts, in different forms or by different actors.