



Consultation TOR for the development of Learning and Assessment Standards for the humanitarian sector¹

1- Introduction

Bioforce, Pearson and RedR-UK, funded and supported by the Humanitarian Learning Academy (HLA), are facilitating the co-creation of sector-specific Learning and Assessment Standards (L&A Standards or the Standards) and associated quality assurance mechanisms (QAM). This initiative will contribute to a new global system for professional development in the humanitarian sector.

Widely endorsed and adopted L&A Standards that include clear, measurable commitments will provide clarity and harmonisation of best practice for training and assessment providers. Use of the Standards and associated QAM will contribute to recognising, developing and recording the competencies of humanitarian workers to support the delivery of higher quality humanitarian action.

The process of developing the Standards and QAM will be consultative. This document outlines the guiding principles, selection of co-creators, process and methodology and timeframe of the development process.

An essential condition for the creation of any quality assured standard by a sector is the process of developing the materials with the community of practitioners. A participatory process that draws upon the extensive knowledge within the humanitarian community will develop quality assured standards that genuinely reflect the sector's needs. The result will be coherent, widely accepted, sector specific learning and assessment standards.

The development of the Standards and QAM will be structured in five main phases:

- Pre- Consultation
- Consultation and Co-creation
- Development of support materials and QAM for the Standards
- Piloting
- Finalisation and hand-over to the sector

The process will be designed and implemented following guiding principles (see section 2) and will involve representatives of the humanitarian sector.

A Management Group and Programme Team will oversee the process, supported by an Advisory Group.

If you have any queries about the L&A Standards or the quality assurance mechanisms, please contact the following members of the Programme Team:

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¹ Adapted from the CHS Consultation and Decision Making Process, 2014



2- Guiding principles

The development of the Standards with associated QAM for the humanitarian sector (including consultation, co-creation, piloting and finalization) will follow the methodology of “Open Standards”.

"Open Standards" are standards made available to the general public and are developed (or approved) and maintained via a collaborative and consensus driven process².

Open Standards facilitate systems and organisations working together and sharing information and are intended for widespread adoption. Open Standards rely on a broadly consultative and inclusive group including representatives from every key stakeholder group in the sector. This group discusses and debates the technical merits, demerits and feasibility of a proposed common protocol. After the doubts and reservations of all involved stakeholders are addressed, the resulting common document is (will be) endorsed as a common standard. This document is subsequently released to the public, and henceforth becomes an open standard. The vision is that organizations and individuals (even those who were not part of the original development group) can use the standard and quality mechanisms documents in their work, and will thus be working together, from a common ground by design.

The Open Standard methodology for the L&A Standards and associated QAM will be built on two principles:

- **Usability:** the Standards and associated QAM are easy to understand and use. They have an intuitive format and simple language.
- **Relevance:** the Standards and associated QAM satisfy the needs of the target users (learning and assessment providers).

To adhere to those principles, the consultation process will be:

- **Transparent:** with open communication, and accountability in relation to every stage of the process. This will include consideration and response to comments at decision-making points.
- **Inclusive:** ensure that any stakeholder group or region of the world does not dominate the co-creation process.
- **Participatory:** the consultation process will use a variety of methods to ensure accessibility.
- **Complementary:** the elaboration process of the Standards and associated QAM will take into account other standards and associated quality mechanisms where appropriate.

3- Selection of co-creators

In order to develop the Standards and QAM, the consortium will consult a wide and diverse group of stakeholders within the humanitarian sector.

² This definition of open standards comes from the ITU-T, a standards development organization part of the International Telecommunications Union (a specialized agency of the United Nations).



The following stakeholders have been identified:

- ❖ Academics
- ❖ Governments and Donors
- ❖ International and Regional Organisations
- ❖ Learning & Development providers
- ❖ National and international NGOs
- ❖ People in the humanitarian sector (e.g. humanitarian workers, consultants)
- ❖ Private sector

In order for the project to gain as much sector ownership and legitimacy as possible, particular attention will be paid to people working in their own regions and communities, with their perspectives prioritised during the co-creation process.

4- Process and methodology

The co-creation of the Standards and QAM is designed as an iterative process and will be conducted via a number of accessible forums, utilising face-to-face and electronic communication to ensure a global representation of stakeholders.

The consultation will draw on existing research, such as that conducted under the inception phase of the Humanitarian Passport Initiative (HPI) and other research already undertaken by core partners, and on the wide networks of members, partners and contacts which the organisations have across the globe and in their regional offices. In addition, the consultation will draw on networks established by the Academy and Programme partners.

Those interviewees, selected by the programme team will be contacted and asked to take part in this project as a follow up to the HPI. Then, the aforementioned interviewees will be invited to provide contacts of likely interested institutions according to a snowball sampling.

The following will be our co-creators in this process:

The Managers: they sit together in the Management Group that is composed of five members from Bioforce, HLA, Pearson and RedR who will support and oversee the whole process; having to approve each version until finalisation.

The Advisors: a friendly and reactive group of experts in the humanitarian sector that we know and trust who will provide guidance as an *Advisory Group* on the development of the Standards and QAM, but will not have a role in the writing of the drafts.

The Contributors: the stakeholders contacted to seek for opinions, expert advice, contributions, models, templates, best practices.

The Writers: a group of people from the field, identified during the regional workshops and who are experts on training and/or assessment in the humanitarian sector. This Writers Group will work closely with the Programme Team to write and produce the version that will be used for piloting.

The Testers: a group of learning and assessment providers keen to pilot the Standards and QAM in 2018 who will offer practice-based recommendations for amendment and modifications that will lead to the final version.

The drafting process will span 5 phases:



- Pre-Consultation
- Co-creation
- Development of support materials and QAM for the Standards
- Piloting
- Finalisation and hand-over to the sector

Phase 1 – Pre-Consultation (February – March 2017)

This Phase is mainly for consultation with key stakeholders identified under the inception phase of the HPI and new potential co-creators identified through the different networks and partners of the members of the consortium. The methodology will include revision of the inception phase findings and recommendations, e-mail consultation and semi-structures internal interviews/workshops.

The feedback will be analysed and collated to prepare Version 1 of the L&A Standards. This will be presented to the Management Group and Advisory Group for their input and undergo a peer-review. All the feedback will be incorporated to create a Version 2 of the Standards.

Phase 2 – Consultation and co-creation (April to July 2017)

During this Phase the Programme Team will host consultations in six different regions of the world: Asia, East Africa, Europe, Latin America, Middle East and West Africa.

In each region the team will organise workshops, focus groups discussions and interviews to gather the field expertise and best practices on learning and assessment of competencies.

During this Phase other social media and web-based tools will be designed to gather feedback at a global and open level. Other stakeholders will be contacted by phone or face-to-face for semi-structured interviews.

In each regional workshop, the Programme Team will invite three participants to join the Writers' Group, on a voluntary basis. These people will work remotely - receiving and reviewing drafts and suggesting inputs to create Version 3 of the L&A Standards by the end of July 2017.

Version 3 will be presented to the Advisory Group for comments, and then submitted to the Management for validation and approval in preparation for the pilot phase.

LAUNCH of the L&A Standards – September 2017

Phase 3 – Development of support materials and QAM for the Standards (September 2017 to March 2018)

Prior to piloting the Standards, the Programme Team will work to develop all the required support materials. A complete package of the L&A Standards and QAM, together with all the support material will be shared and piloted in Phase 4.

Phase 4 – Piloting (April to October 2018)

This Phase will start with an early adoption of the L&A Standards and associated QAM by learning and assessment providers keen to test them, they are The Testers.

All the supporting material will be accessible online and piloting organisations will have guidance and support from the Programme Team and an external group of consultants.



Phase 5 – Finalisation and Hand-over to the Sector (November 2018)

Practice-based feedback from the pilot phase will be essential to develop the final version of the L&A Standards and associated QAM that will be revised by the Advisors and the Managers, and approved by the Managers in a face-to-face workshop.

This final version will then be handed over to the humanitarian sector to incorporate and use as part of best-practice for learning and assessment providers.

5- Timeframe

Phase	What	Output	When
1	Pre-consultation	Version 1 of the L&A Standards and associated QAM	February – March 2017
2	Consultation and Co-creation	Version 2 and 3	April to July 2017
<i>LAUNCH of the L&A Standards – September 2017</i>			
3	Development of support materials and QAM for the Standards	Complete package of the L&A Standards and QAM	September 2017 to March 2018
4	Piloting	Piloting of the L&A Standards and associated QAM by early adopters	April to October 2018
5	Finalisation and Hand-over to the Sector	Adoption of the Standards.	November 2018

CONSULTATION PROCESS TIMELINE

February - March 2017

PRE-CONSULTATION

- Consultation with key stakeholders from the Research Phase of HPI and new co-creators.
- Feedback collected through e-mail , on-line collaboration and semi-structures internal interviews
- Output: Version 1 of the L&A standards and associated QAM

April - July 2017

CONSULTATION AND CO-CREATION

- Regional consultations held in Europe, Middle East, East Africa, West Africa, Asia, Latin America and North America.
- Feedback collected via workshop, focus group discussions, interviews and web-based tools
- Output: Version 2 and 3 of the L&A standard and associated QAM

September 2017 - March 2018

DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPORT MATERIALS AND QAM FOR THE STANDARDS

- Prior to piloting the Standards, the Programme Team will work to develop all the required support materials.
- Output: A complete package of the L&A Standards and QAM, together with all the support material will be shared and piloted in Phase 3.

April– October 2018

PILOTING

- Piloting of the L&A Standards and Associated QAM by early adopters
- Feedback collected through real practice supported by consultants
- Output: Final Version of the L&A Standards and Associated QAM

November 2018

FINALISATION AND HAND-OVER

- Finalisation hand-over to the sector and planning for the future
- Output: Roadmap for the future and final version of the standards

With funding and support from:



Annex 1

Glossary of Terms:

Assessment providers	<p>Trained persons who can assess the competencies, aptitude and performance of an individual or group of participants. Various aptitude diagnostic and assessment processes are used in order to obtain information about applicants' abilities, development potential or achievement to date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - http://www.psychometric-success.com/assessment-centers/acfaq-what-is.htm#sthash.smm17Z5C.dp
Assurance	<p>The maintenance of a desired level of quality in a service or product, especially by means of attention to every stage of the process of delivery or production. A way of preventing mistakes and avoiding problems when delivering solutions or services to customers; which ISO 9000 defines as "part of quality management focused on providing confidence that quality requirements will be fulfilled". It is the prevention of mistakes by managing critical points during a project cycle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - www.Meriam-Webster.com /dictionary; ISO9000
Co-creation	<p>The process of bringing different stakeholders together in order to jointly produce a mutually valued outcome.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>developed by the Programme Team</i>
Endorsement	<p>Support or approval of an article, individual or entity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - www.vocabulary.com
Mechanism	<p>A natural or established process by which something takes place or is brought about.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/mechanism
Quality	<p>The standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; the degree of excellence of something.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
Standard	<p>An agreed measurement of an agreed way to do something.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - www.bsigroup.com
Training provider	<p>An organisation or individual that provides education or training services Training providers may be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organisations specifically set up for this purpose; 2. Employers, who provide training as a part of their business activities. 3. Training providers also include independent individuals who offer services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/13125.aspx