

D9.1 Internal Communications Channels

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LACE

Learning Analytics Community Exchange

Internal Communications Channels

Public Deliverable – D9.1

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Keywords: management, internal communications, quality criteria

This document summarises communication mechanisms for the effective and efficient management of the LACE project. It also defines management procedures and necessary internal reporting templates.

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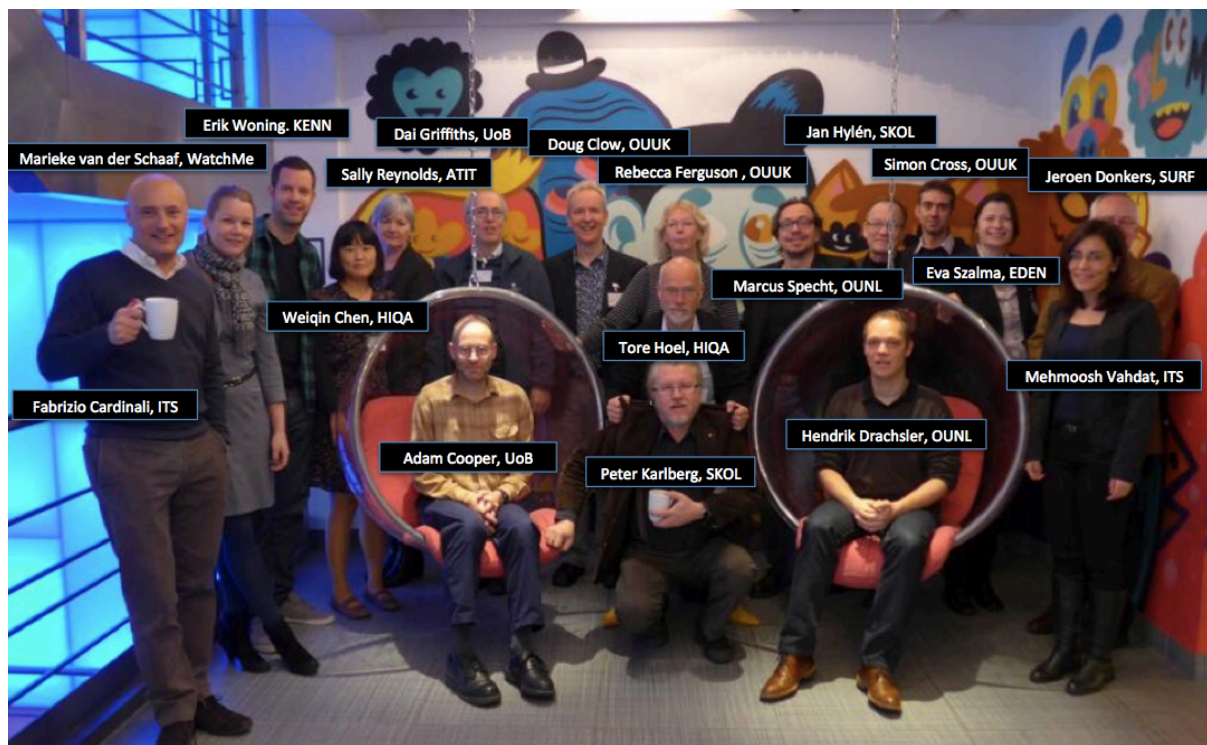
Introduction

This document reports about the established communication mechanisms for the management of the LACE project. It defines management procedures and necessary internal reporting templates. In the following section we will shortly present the project management tool and its document archive in Google.

Initialisation of the project

The cooperation among the LACE partners is very committed so far. Partners are actively involved in the WPs that have met the objectives set at the project proposal as well as have produced first community events. As the Project Coordinator, we have worked to act efficiently as the intermediary between the PO and the consortium. To this end, we have been responsible for chairing the kickoff meeting, the periodic online meetings, and taking all actions to enable proper decision-making.

During the kickoff meeting in Brussels, the details of the project work plan have been specified, a detailed project plan and time schedule has been created and each partner nominated one person who is responsible for the lead of the WP. All partners signed a contract/bilateral agreement in which the duties and responsibilities for each partner are described in detail.

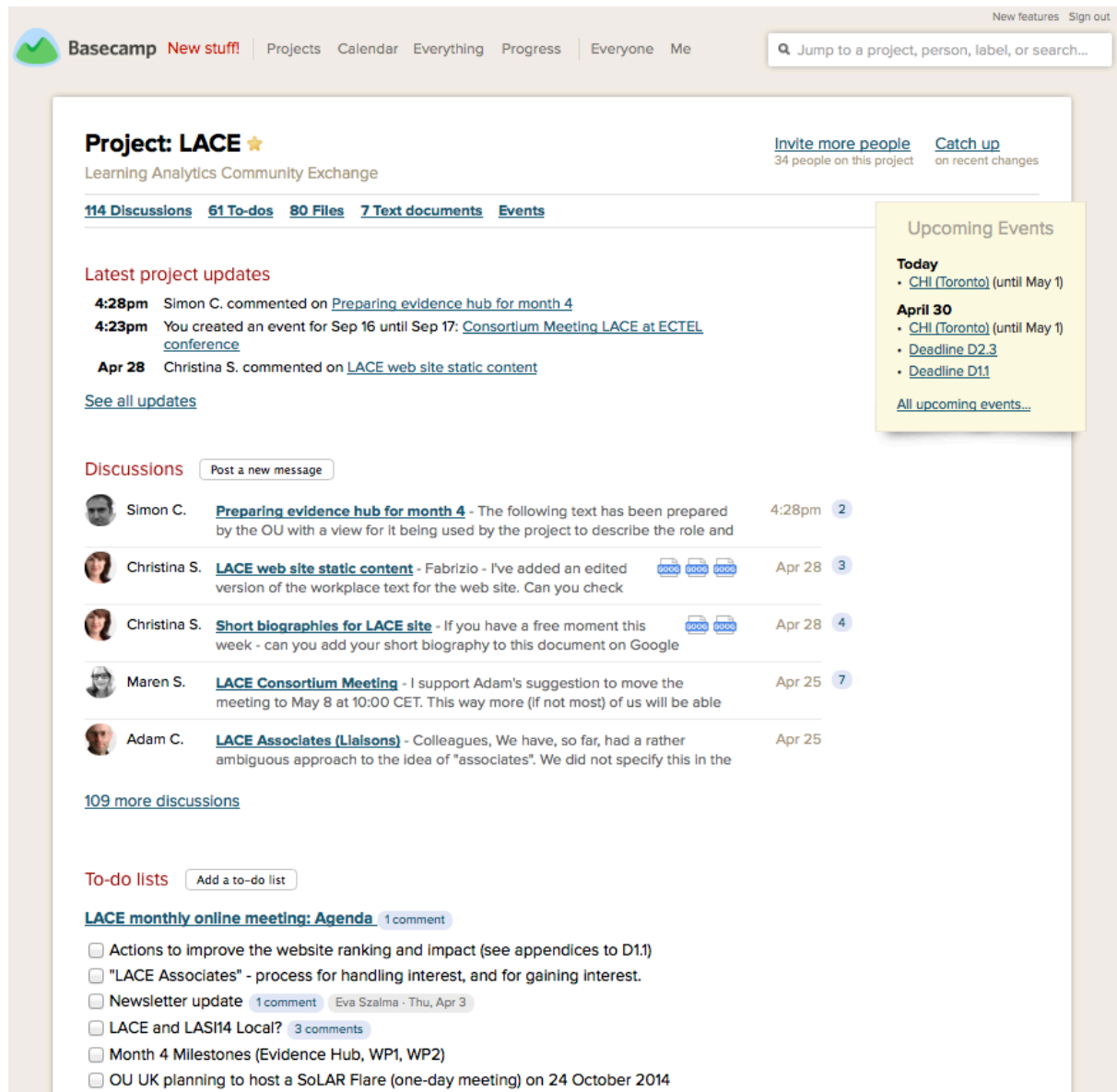


As coordinator we regularly set up online meetings with the partners and especially the WP leaders in order to monitor and review the various on going parts and tasks of the project. To further optimise the collaborative working environment and provide a shared workspace for dissemination of project-related information and collection of deliverables/administrative documents (e.g. timesheets), we use the online project management tool **Basecamp** (<http://www.basecamp.com>). The use of the Basecamp project communication tool by all participants is an essential step towards sustaining operational consistency within the project. This ensures the smooth operation of the

project and guarantees that all efforts are focused on ensuring that partners submit all required progress reports, deliverables, financial statements etc. Initially we planned to use the Atlassian Confluence wiki environment and JIRA (task and issue tracker) but as the work with basecamp is much more convenient, we have decided to use this tool for the project management and the internal communications within the project.

The project management tool basecamp

This section gives an overview of the basecamp instance for the LACE project.



The screenshot displays the Basecamp interface for the 'Project: LACE' instance. The top navigation bar includes 'New stuff!', 'Projects', 'Calendar', 'Everything', 'Progress', 'Everyone', and 'Me'. A search bar is located on the right. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Project: LACE** (starred): Includes links for 'Invite more people' (34 people on this project) and 'Catch up on recent changes'.
- Summary:** 114 Discussions, 61 To-dos, 80 Files, 7 Text documents, and Events.
- Latest project updates:**
 - 4:28pm: Simon C. commented on [Preparing evidence hub for month 4](#).
 - 4:23pm: You created an event for Sep 16 until Sep 17: [Consortium Meeting LACE at ECTEL conference](#).
 - Apr 28: Christina S. commented on [LACE web site static content](#).
- Upcoming Events:**
 - Today:**
 - CHI (Toronto) (until May 1)
 - April 30:**
 - CHI (Toronto) (until May 1)
 - Deadline D2.3
 - Deadline D1.1
- Discussions:**
 - Simon C. (4:28pm, 2 replies): [Preparing evidence hub for month 4](#) - The following text has been prepared by the OU with a view for it being used by the project to describe the role and
 - Christina S. (Apr 28, 3 replies): [LACE web site static content](#) - Fabrizio - I've added an edited version of the workplace text for the web site. Can you check
 - Christina S. (Apr 28, 4 replies): [Short biographies for LACE site](#) - If you have a free moment this week - can you add your short biography to this document on Google
 - Maren S. (Apr 25, 7 replies): [LACE Consortium Meeting](#) - I support Adam's suggestion to move the meeting to May 8 at 10:00 CET. This way more (if not most) of us will be able
 - Adam C. (Apr 25): [LACE Associates \(Liaisons\)](#) - Colleagues, We have, so far, had a rather ambiguous approach to the idea of "associates". We did not specify this in the
- To-do lists:**
 - [LACE monthly online meeting: Agenda](#) (1 comment)
 - Actions to improve the website ranking and impact (see appendices to D1.1)
 - "LACE Associates" - process for handling interest, and for gaining interest.
 - Newsletter update (1 comment, Eva Szalma · Thu, Apr 3)
 - LACE and LASI14 Local? (3 comments)
 - Month 4 Milestones (Evidence Hub, WP1, WP2)
 - OU UK planning to host a SoLAR Flare (one-day meeting) on 24 October 2014

Figure 1: Screenshot of the LACE basecamp instance.

Members

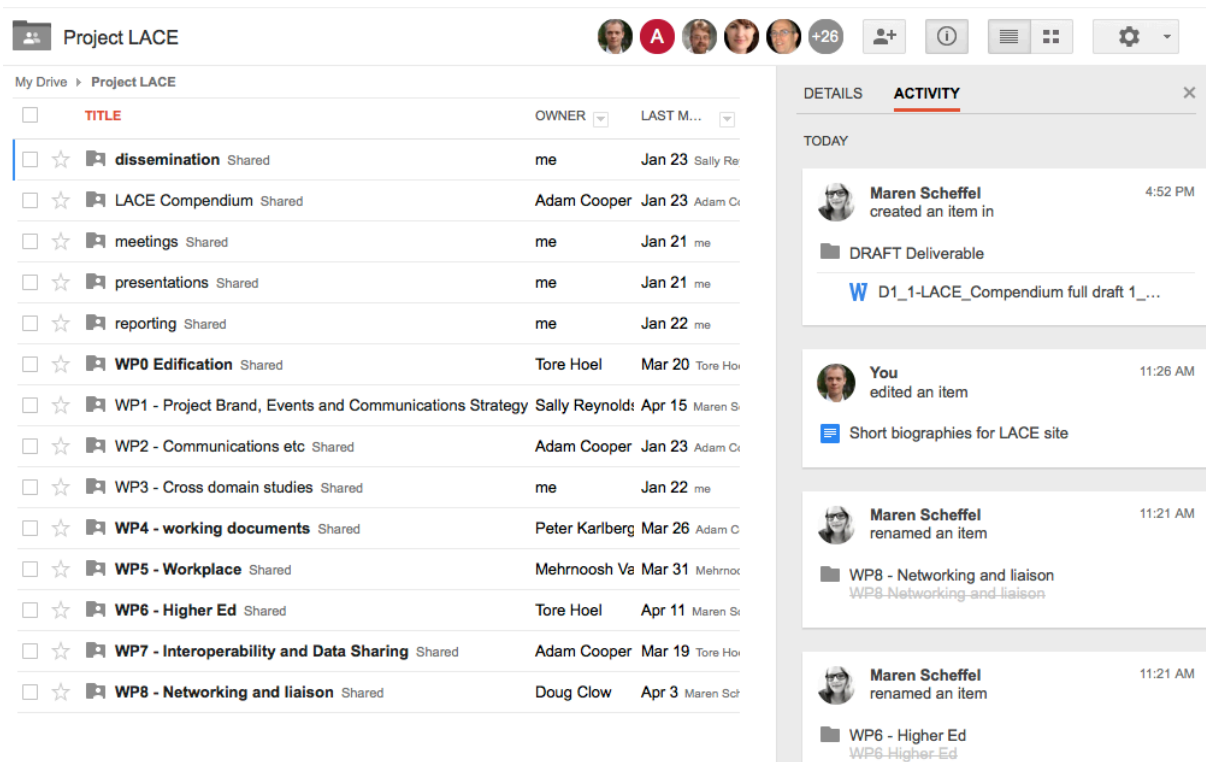
All employees of the LACE consortium have been invited to the basecamp instance. In addition, the contact details (phone, mobile, Google account, mail account) of each employee have been added to the basecamp tool in order to guarantee fast communication.

Basecamp enables all partners to allocate tasks with specific deadlines to partners within the consortium. This is very effective for collaboration within WPs as it goes beyond institutional borders. All communication is tracked within the system and can be viewed by all partners. In that way everybody can look into an on going task and check the latest communication about it. This allows a very transparent way of project management that is well documented and reduces confusing email communication.

Document storage via Google drive

Basecamp is a very efficient tool to track tasks and progress within the project but it is less suited for collaborative document management. However, it does provide the opportunity to add Google docs to any comment or tasks within the system. Therefore, we created a shared Google drive folder that stores all written documents and spreadsheets of the project. The Google drive folder allows a very efficient collaboration opportunity as the documents can be edited by multiple project partners at once. Google also provides an activity stream and a version history for each document (see Figure 2 right side).

Figure 2 shows a screenshot of the Google drive folder that is used for the document management in the LACE project.



TITLE	OWNER	LAST M...
dissemination Shared	me	Jan 23 Sally Re
LACE Compendium Shared	Adam Cooper	Jan 23 Adam Cr
meetings Shared	me	Jan 21 me
presentations Shared	me	Jan 21 me
reporting Shared	me	Jan 22 me
WP0 Edification Shared	Tore Hoel	Mar 20 Tore Ho
WP1 - Project Brand, Events and Communications Strategy	Sally Reynolds	Apr 15 Maren Si
WP2 - Communications etc Shared	Adam Cooper	Jan 23 Adam Cr
WP3 - Cross domain studies Shared	me	Jan 22 me
WP4 - working documents Shared	Peter Karlberg	Mar 26 Adam C
WP5 - Workplace Shared	Mehrnoosh Va	Mar 31 Mehrno
WP6 - Higher Ed Shared	Tore Hoel	Apr 11 Maren Si
WP7 - Interoperability and Data Sharing Shared	Adam Cooper	Mar 19 Tore Ho
WP8 - Networking and liaison Shared	Doug Clow	Apr 3 Maren Scr

ACTIVITY

TODAY

- Maren Scheffel created an item in 4:52 PM
 - DRAFT Deliverable
 - D1_1-LACE_Compendum full draft 1_...
- You edited an item 11:26 AM
 - Short biographies for LACE site
- Maren Scheffel renamed an item 11:21 AM
 - WP8 - Networking and liaison
 - WP8 - Networking and liaison
- Maren Scheffel renamed an item 11:21 AM
 - WP6 - Higher Ed
 - WP6 - Higher Ed

Figure 2: Screenshot of the shared Google drive folder for the document management of the LACE project.

Online Meetings

The partner HIAO contributed an Adobe connect instance for the online meetings within the LACE project. The Adobe Connect instance is reserved for periodic WP meetings and the monthly consortium call. In addition, any partner can use the instance whenever it is needed to have a high quality online meeting with stakeholder groups or bilateral working meetings.



Figure 3: Screenshot of the Adobe connect instance

Management procedures

Deliverable procedure

In order to guarantee high quality deliverables, the LACE consortium committed to the following deliverable procedure guidelines during the kickoff meeting.

All deliverables have to be submitted quality controlled and in time. All deliverables have to be submitted **internally 1 month before the official submission deadline**. Coordination, production and ensurance of timeliness of deliverables are in the responsibility of each WP leader. Each WP leader should suggest possible reviewers for the WP deliverables. The assigned internal reviewer then has one week for the review. Two weeks remain for the final changes; the scientific and technical management committee has to decide that the quality of the deliverable is sufficient and ready for submission.

T0 is the last day of the month in which the deliverable is due.

1. (T0 - 3 weeks): Deliverable submitted for review on basecamp
2. (T0 - 2 weeks): First reviews available on basecamp
3. (T0 - 4 days): End of cycle of corrections and further reviews (if necessary)
4. (T0 - 2 days): Final version uploaded on basecamp - WP leader does final quality check
5. T0: Deliverable submitted to the Commission

Naming

1. For the draft phase please use: 'LACE_Dx_x_DRAFT_Vx_x.doc'
2. For the review phase please use: 'LACE_Dx_x_REVIEW_Vx_x.doc'
3. For the final version, we will use: 'LACE_Dx_x.pdf'

Prototype deliverables are to be internally released 4 weeks ahead of the deadline. LACE deliverable template & review form available in the shared Google drive folder.

Financial Reporting procedures

Internal (due to the coordinator every six months)

Every six months, all partners report the research-work they carried out during the period. OUNL collects the information, merges all contributions from the partners, and sends the merged version to the WP leaders for double check. The templates for the financial report are shared in the Google folder.

Official (due to the EU)

Periodic Progress Report (Annual Report): Research progress toward objectives, deliverables and milestones achieved, any deviation from the work plan. Due within 60 days after the end of each reporting period.

Periodic Management Report (Annual Report): justification of resources and claimed costs, financial statement called Form C per partner. Due within 60 days after the end of each reporting period.

About ...

Version History

Date	Notes	Person
2014-04-14	Basic document structure set up in the template. Incorporated initial sections.	Hendrik Drachsler, OUNL
2014-04-30	Update of the final draft and sign-off by coordinator.	Maren Scheffel, OUNL

About this document

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About LACE

The LACE project brings together existing key European players in the field of learning analytics & educational data mining who are committed to build communities of practice and share emerging best practice in order to make progress towards four objectives.

- Objective 1 – Promote knowledge creation and exchange*
- Objective 2 – Increase the evidence base*
- Objective 3 – Contribute to the definition of future directions*
- Objective 4 – Build consensus on interoperability and data sharing*

<http://www.laceproject.eu>



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