WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in the **COMMIT** self-assessment processes for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

If you are reading this document is because you have heard about this project and the materials that it has developed (maybe you have participated in a face-to-face meeting or an on-line activity) and you are contemplating the possibility to organise a self-assessment process in your institution. The **COMMIT** consortium can only encourage you to do so. The **COMMIT** consortium's experiences on the process were very enlightening and enriching. It would be expected also that it is of great benefit for you and the colleagues who participate and, overall, for your institution.

1. Which are the documents that complete this Self-Assessment Process Tool Kit?

The COMMIT project has developed a number of documents and templates to help you prepare and undertake this process. Some of the documents are for you: **the organiser**. Some of the documents are for those members of staff who will agree to participate in this process and accept to be interviewed and discuss the self-assessment tools with you: **the participants**. You may also want to involve someone from outside your university, to act as facilitator during this activity, highlighting points that internal staff take for granted but an observer would find interesting to stress and discuss: **an external expert**[1].

Here you have the list of materials that COMMIT has developed and that you can use:

- **Fact Sheet**: This template is for you to fill in and will help you start thinking about your institution and its position in terms of Lifelong Learning (LLL) and in terms of Social Dimension

- **Template Agenda**: This template is for you to fill in when planning the activity. We recommend this activity to have at least two days in length. Shorter processes has been proved not to be enough if you want to carry out a thorough process and include in this process a good number of members of staff at different levels, with different perspectives

- **Report Form**: This template is for you to fill in at the end of the activity. It will help you to reflect about the data and feedback collected and will help you think what to do (or what to recommend to your university to do) next. You could also distribute this template to those members of staff who will participate in the process and ask them to give you feedback about this activity. Their feedback will be probably a good addition to your own perspective and would complete the report that you might be sharing with the top level at your institution

- **Step by Step Procedure**: This document is for you and those who will be joining this activity to read. It explains how the process work and the order in which the different steps take place

- **Short Information**: This document explains briefly the activity and is for you to distribute to those who will be joining this activity

- **Executive Summary**: This document is for you to distribute to those who will be joining this activity as short description of the project and its outputs

- **Policy reminders**: This document is for you to distribute to those who will be joining this activity. It lists the main findings of the project and the advice that the **COMMIT** consortium gives to policy makers and users of these materials

Regarding the processes that your institution can undertake, **COMMIT** has developed four tools:

- **Strategy Process tool**: This tool helps institutions to initiate and deploy a strategy process regarding lifelong learning and social engagement at your institution

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[1] Involvement of an External expert in your internal process can be organised by contacting **eucen** that will assign an expert to attend your event and act as facilitator and adviser throughout the process. Please contact **eucen** for further details. Email office@eucen.eu stating in the subject "**COMMIT consultancy**"

- **Strategy Content tool**: This tool helps institutions to understand their own strategic content of LLL and promote internal discussion about the need to focus on the social dimension of LLL in HEIs

- **Benchmarking or Charter tool**: This tool encourages institutions to assess the level of implementation of the 10 commitments listed in the "European Universities Charter for LLL" in their institution

- **Monitoring Attainment tool**: This tool supports institutions to monitor attainment in HE and to integrate measurement in place in HEIs management systems

2. External experts

The COMMIT partners are experts in these processes. You will find that sometimes is very useful to have an external perspective to help you progress in the analysis of your institution. When planning this activity, if you decide that to have an external perspective would be helpful for you and your institution, please contact eucen at **office@eucen.eu** stating in the subject "**COMMIT** consultancy". There are two basic levels of assistance you can ask for:

- **Advice on the use of the tools and processes**. A first contact with eucen to help you with this would be always answered. You would receive some information on what involves to obtain support beyond one hour of time

- **Advice on the participation of an external expert in the activity that you are organising in your institution**. This would involve some time for organising the visit, the time of the expert in your institution and the costs of travel and subsistence that the expert would have. Further needs could be assessed on demand

3. What would you have to do now?

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- Please read all the documents mentioned above in section 1

- Prepare the Fact Sheet

- Read all the four self-assessment tools and choose which one(s) you want to use

- Select who you would like to involve in the interviews and discussions. You need to think strategically who should be involved in the activity. We recommend you to include the relevant members of staff that can contribute with information and maybe data but also top level management who might see the importance of the process and decide that this is a good opportunity to stop the day-to-day work and analyse the institution. You need to encourage different actors in your institution to join you, that is:

  - University leaders (Rector, Vice-Rector, Registrar…)
  - Heads of Faculty/Department
  - Deans
  - Representatives of Students/Union of students
  - Counsellors/Career advisers
  - Directors of centres of Adult Education/LLL/CE

  We recommend you to involve around 12 participants in total, including at least one person from each of these different areas. We suggest you to choose two tools for this process and that you carry out the interviews and discussions in a two days period, without interruptions

- Once the above is all done, you can start contacting your selected participants. Send to them the Short information document and the filled in Fact sheet. Phone them and explain what this activity is about, why it is important and which tools you will be using in the face-to-face meetings. Plan the activity well ahead and hope your participants have their agendas empty. Once the date is settled and if most of the pre-selected participants accept to participate, you will be ready to start!

- Take the Step-by-Step document now and start following the actions recommended in the sequence listed

4. Your results

Although you do not have any obligation to do this, the **COMMIT** project would be interested to receive a copy of your final Feedback Report. This would help us recording internally who is using the **COMMIT** materials and what users think about them. Any document received from users would be kept totally confidential and would never be disclosed to anyone or uploaded in any public space. If you agree to share your feedback with us, please send it to **office@eucen.eu** stating in the subject "**COMMIT feedback**". Thank you.

5. What next?

If you find this exercise interesting and useful, your institution can decide to establish a review of the results after two or three years. This would help you to compare the progress made in the areas that the self-assessment process highlights as important to be improved or changed.

Maybe you do not want to establish regular revisions of the work done. But you might want to consider the possibility to set up another session using the tools you have not used in first instance. You can use this same Welcome document and the rest of the Self-Assessment Process Tool Kit and approach in your next activity.

Be aware that maybe the participants you have involved in the first process are not the participants that you need to involve in the next occasion. Think about it and choose the most adequate participants for each tool and in each occasion you organise one of these activities.

6. Final points of advice

Please be aware that this activity and the involvement of your colleagues will be more effective and will have a bigger impact if your Rector or/and your Vice-Rectors feel it is an interesting exercise that they want to undertake. It is important you try to wake up their interest and involvement in this activity

Do not forget that eucen and the **COMMIT** consortium are available if you have doubts or need some help during your activity

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