

EPICUR JOINT TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTRE (TLC)



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategic Importance of an Alliance-Wide Joint Teaching and Learning Centre

The European University Alliance EPiCUR aims to transform education, research, and transfer practices to develop innovative solutions and train new generations of European change-makers. The EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC), established during the EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT initiative (2022- 2026), provides resources, events, and training for teaching (support) staff across the Alliance. Its key added value lies in fostering internationalisation, digital transformation, and quality development in teaching and learning, aligning with the strategic priorities of the European Commission's Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP) (2021-2027)¹.

The EPiC TLC directly supports several specific actions of the DEAP, including:

- Action 1: Fostering the development of a high-performing digital education ecosystem by providing access to digital tools, resources, and professional development that enhance the digital competence of educators
- Action 3: Facilitating access to high-quality digital content and establishing a European Digital Education Content Framework by contributing to resource sharing, ensuring interoperability, and supporting the exchange of good practices
- Action 5: Supporting digital pedagogy through training programs that align with the Digital Competence Framework for Educators (DigCompEdu), ensuring that teaching staff have the skills and confidence to use digital tools effectively.
- Action 12: Providing targeted professional development opportunities to support advanced digital skills development among educators

¹ Cf. European Commission. Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027). <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-top-ics/digital-education/action-plan>

The Centre's focus on professional development for digitally competent educators, providing user-friendly tools, and supporting innovative teaching aligns with DEAP's objective of resetting Education for the digital age. By enabling educators to design and deliver transformative educational offers that meet international and digital education standards, the EPiC TLC significantly contributes to building a high-performing digital education ecosystem within the EPICUR Alliance.

The EPiC TLC aligns with other initiatives across European University Alliances, such as the ECIU's University Teacher Hub and Enlight's Teaching and Learning Hub, which also focus on fostering professional development and collaborative digital learning environments for educators. By positioning itself as a leader in this area, EPICUR not only supports its own alliance goals but also contributes to setting best practices for other alliances within the broader European higher education landscape.

The EPiC TLC's strategic role is directly aligned with EPICUR's broader mission and the goals of DEAP. It empowers educators to design and deliver transformative educational offers that comply with EPICUR's international education values, including interculturality, interdisciplinarity, and inclusivity. By supporting professional development and resource-sharing, the EPiC TLC strengthens the Alliance's objectives of creating a European learning experience, promoting digital transformation, and enhancing cross-institutional teaching collaborations.

Establishment of an Alliance-Wide Service Unit

An Alliance-wide, intrinsically motivated Task Team of educational experts collaboratively developed the EPiC TLC's resources, ensuring that the Centre's offerings are both usable and accepted across the Alliance. This co-creation process is vital to ensuring that the EPiC TLC meets the diverse needs of teaching staff in different institutional and cultural contexts.

The EPiC TLC was built on principles of co-creation, user-orientation, and continuous quality improvement. Design thinking methodologies and 'flipped meetings' were used, with Task Team members preparing asynchronously

before engaging in co-creation and decision-making during synchronous online meetings. This approach allowed for flexible, efficient collaboration and iterative development.

Between 11/2022 and 09/2024, the EPiC TLC was conceptualised, implemented, and opened for teaching (support) staff across EPICUR. Milestones included: Concept and Terms of Reference, design of name, email- address and logo, development of the virtual space, grand opening, event programme concept and pilot trainings.

The establishment of the EPiC TLC involved navigating challenges such as engaging a cross-Alliance team, addressing organisational and hiring process mismatches, fostering acceptance within individual universities, and ensuring efficient virtual collaboration. Strategies included forming a motivated Task Team, co-creation of the Terms of Reference, continuous stakeholder engagement, and leveraging communication tools, procedures and platforms.

Implementation of the EPiC TLC

Creating synergies, the EPiC TLC is conceptualised to complement local teaching support units' offers. The continuously developed virtual space supports the EPiC TLC's core objectives in three dedicated areas:

- ***Let's Connect!*** facilitating development of and exchange within the Community of Practice,
- ***Let's Explore!*** enabling the sharing of approaches and resources across the Alliance,
- ***Let's Grow!*** supporting teaching competence development and professionalization.

To keep stakeholders informed and engaged, the EPiC TLC implements a proactive communication strategy that includes regular updates, public relations activities, and alignment with broader EPICUR goals. This includes a monthly newsletter, as well as presentations during meetings and events to ensure visibility and support.

Evaluation

The success of the EPiC TLC is closely tied to its performance on specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which in turn contribute to the achievement of broader EPICUR project KPIs. For instance, improving the number of participants in the Community of Practice and the availability of professional development tools and opportunities supports the project-wide goals of increasing staff engagement in cross-border teaching collaborations. Additionally, the provision of Open Educational Resources (OER) and targeted training for Hybrid Classrooms enhances digitalisation efforts, directly contributing to the project's target of expanding shared/joint services and promoting the creation of hybrid learning environments across the Alliance.

Due to the limited time that the EPiC TLC has been operational, a complete evaluation is not yet possible. A comprehensive evaluation is planned for March 2025, after the Centre has been running for a full year.

Co-creation remains central to ensuring the acceptance and integration of EPiC TLC offers into local infrastructures. However, the project-based nature of EPICUR-SHAPE-IT raises sustainability concerns, particularly regarding the continuation of services post-funding. The next steps include advancing the development of Open Educational Resources and finalising the EPICUR Framework for International Teaching Competence, ensuring that the Centre remains a valuable resource for educators across the Alliance.

Conclusion

The EPiC TLC provides an essential virtual space and activities that support teaching (support) staff across the EPICUR Alliance. The collaborative efforts have yielded synergetic effects, complementing offerings of local teaching support units and strengthening the overall impact of EPICUR's educational initiatives. Its strategic importance in advancing EPICUR's goals, combined with its focus on continuous quality development and co-creation, ensures that the EPiC TLC will continue to be a key driver of innovation and professional development within the Alliance. Successful approaches taken in establishing

the EPiC TLC may inform for other university alliances aiming to establish central services in teaching and learning.

2. INTRODUCTION: STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE AND ALIGNMENT

This Deliverable has been prepared by the 4.3 Task Leaders, located at the University of Freiburg. It builds on contributions and feedback provided by a dedicated team of experts from across the EPICUR Alliance concerned with the establishment of the EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC), i.e., the Task Team (see Section 3.3).

2.1. Alignment of the EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) with EPICUR's Broader Objectives

The EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) plays a critical role in advancing the overall mission and objectives of the EPICUR Alliance, which is dedicated to transforming higher education across Europe and to equip all students with truly European skills. In alignment with the principles of EPICUR's Education Policy, the EPiC TLC fulfils the need for an organised community of teaching practice and systematic guidance regarding EPICUREan teaching and learning to foster the development of teacher competencies in order to support the integration of EPICUR Education values and EPICUR International Learning Competencies into their teaching.

As a key component of Work Package (WP) 4 *Scaling-up the learning offer*, the EPiC TLC goals and results align with the broader framework of EPICUR's core missions, particularly in supporting international, innovative, interdisciplinary, intercultural, inclusive and interactive teaching and learning experiences (EPICUR's International Educational Values – henceforth, “Values”).

The EPICUR Alliance aims to “transform education, research and transfer practices and opportunities across its member universities in order to develop

original cutting-edge solutions and train new generations of European change makers” (EPICUR-SHAPE-IT proposal, updated mission statement, 2022). Accordingly, educators across EPICUR shall be prepared for new challenges in international and intercultural teaching and learning.

The EPiC TLC directly contributes to the EPICUR mission by empowering educators across the Alliance to embrace new and alternative pedagogical methods that uphold EPICUR’s Values. This aligns with EPICUR’s overarching ambition to create educational opportunities responsive to the societal challenges of our time, such as those reflected in EPICUR’s Priority Areas: Sustainable Transformation, European values, Global Health, and Future Intelligence.

Specifically, the EPiC TLC intersects with the following EPICUR objectives:

- **Deepening and widening the EPICUR European learning experience:** The EPiC TLC supports the redesign of curricula and the development of innovative teaching formats that provide a European learning experience for students across all nine partner universities. A key role of the EPiC TLC is to empower educators to design and deliver transformative educational offers that align with EPICUR Educational Principles and Values, ensuring that teaching is intercultural, interdisciplinary, innovative, inclusive, and interactive. Through collaborative teaching, resource sharing, and professional development, the EPiC TLC enhances educators’ ability to create educational experiences that reflect EPICUR’s commitment to widening and deepening the EPICUR European learning experience for all EPICUR students.
- **Empowering digital transformation:** By providing digital tools and spaces for collaboration and resource sharing, the EPiC TLC contributes to EPICUR’s digital transformation agenda. This includes the creation of a virtual teaching and learning environment that connects educators across borders, facilitating the use of innovative digital pedagogies. Additionally, the EPiC TLC is committed to the provision of Open

Educational Resources (OER), ensuring that teaching materials are freely accessible, shareable, and adaptable across the Alliance. This support for OER further enhances the accessibility and scalability of EPiCUR's digital education initiatives.

- **Achieving boundless mobility:** The EPiC TLC focuses on supporting educators in engaging with and facilitating transnational, interdisciplinary teaching. By providing resources, collaborative tools, and professional development opportunities, the EPiC TLC empowers educators to participate in and lead virtual, hybrid, and physical teaching collaborations across EPiCUR's member institutions. This helps in advancing seamless integration of EPiCUR's mobility formats into educators' courses, fostering cross-border educational cooperation and aligning with the Alliance's objective of promoting accessible and diverse teaching and learning experiences across the EPiCUR Alliance or between EPiCUR partner institutions.
- **Building an inclusive and agile governance structure:** The EPiC TLC promotes collaboration and inclusivity within the Alliance by connecting teaching support units across all member universities. The structure and content of the EPiC TLC reflects EPiCUR's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), ensuring that its resources and training opportunities are accessible to educators from different linguistic, cultural, and disciplinary backgrounds.

Through these contributions, the EPiC TLC supports EPiCUR's vision of a value-adding educational offer that is fully integrated in EPiCUR partner institutions' study programmes and curricula through which EPiCUR students can develop change-making expertise and competences needed to address global challenges. By providing an international platform for educators to collaborate and innovate, the EPiC TLC not only enriches teaching and learning within the Alliance but also strengthens the overall impact and visibility of the EPiCUR initiative on the global stage.

2.2. EPiCUR's Strategic Alignment with the Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP)

The EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) is an essential initiative that contributes to the transformation of education within the EPiCUR Alliance. Its establishment is not only a response to the specific needs of the Alliance's teaching (support) staff but also aligns with broader European strategic objectives, particularly the European Commission's Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027)².

The Digital Education Action Plan emphasises two strategic priorities:

1. Fostering the development of a high-performing digital education ecosystem
2. Enhancing digital skills and competences for the digital transformation

The EPiC TLC directly supports several specific actions of the DEAP, including:

- **Action 1:** Fostering the development of a high-performing digital education ecosystem by providing access to digital tools, resources, and professional development that enhance the digital competence of educators
- **Action 3:** Facilitating access to high-quality digital content and establishing a European Digital Education Content Framework by contributing to resource sharing, ensuring interoperability, and supporting the exchange of good practices
- **Action 5:** Supporting digital pedagogy through training programs that align with the Digital Competence Framework for Educators (DigCompEdu), ensuring that teaching staff have the skills and confidence to use digital tools effectively.
- **Action 12:** Providing targeted professional development opportunities to support advanced digital skills development among educators.

² Cf. European Commission. Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027). <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-top-ics/digital-education/action-plan>

The EPiC TLC directly addresses the priorities specified in the DEAP by empowering educators to adopt digital tools and methods in their teaching practices, thereby improving digital competence and confidence among educators. This supports DEAP's goal of fostering a digitally competent education workforce, particularly in areas such as online and blended teaching, and will ensure access to high-quality, user-friendly digital content through curated Open Educational Resources (OER) available in the EPiC TLC's virtual space.

In addition, the EPiC TLC contributes to the development of a high-performing digital education ecosystem within EPICUR, aligning with DEAP's focus on enhancing infrastructure, digital tools, and secure platforms. By promoting collaborative digital learning environments and supporting educators with training and re- sources that respect privacy and ethical standards, the EPiC TLC strengthens EPICUR's capacity to contribute to the digital transformation of European higher education.

Thus, the EPiC TLC not only meets the internal needs of the EPICUR Alliance but also reinforces the European Commission's vision for the future of digital education by contributing to the key actions outlined in the Digital Education Action Plan.

2.3. EPICUR's Strategic Alignment and Benchmarking in European University Alliances

The EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) is not only a key initiative within the EPICUR Alliance but also aligns with broader European University Alliance practices. Across Europe, 64 active alliances are working to enhance teaching and learning, and the EPiC TLC stands out as a best-practice model in the development of cross-institutional, digitally transformative, and collaborative platforms. Initiatives such as the ECIU's University Teacher Hub, Enlight's Teaching and Learning Hub, and EURECA-

PRO's PedPlat share similar goals of fostering digital skills, innovation in pedagogy, and cross-border cooperation among educators.

By leveraging the strength of its nine-member universities, the EPiC TLC supports teaching staff through professional development, resource sharing, and digital opportunities to connect and collaborate – mirroring the collaborative and transformative aims of other alliances. This ensures that EPICUR not only contributes to the broader objectives of the European Education Area but also serves as a reference point for other alliances seeking to build their own teaching and learning centres.

3. OBJECTIVE: ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ALLIANCE-WIDE JOINT TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTRE

In the context of developing and implementing innovative international educational offers in its pilot phase (2019-2022), EPICUR found that teaching staff would benefit from an organised Community of Practice as well as from systematic guidance and support regarding new ways of teaching and learning in EPICUR.

Consequently, in the subsequent funding phase³ (EPICUR-SHAPE-IT: 2022-2026), a joint Teaching and Learning Centre for the EPICUR Alliance was to be developed (as Task 4.3 in the Work-package 4 Scaling up the learning offer) to provide a “single point of reference for guidance and support to educational innovation and teaching practices. These practices include new ways of delivering online and blended forms of education, as well as didactic approaches for teaching in international and interdisciplinary classrooms and efficient ways to adapt courses to the EPICUR context. [...] The EPICUR TLC will work to support teaching staff in the areas of educational innovation, professionalisation of teaching staff and knowledge sharing across EPICUR

³ For the second ERASMUS+ funding phase (2022-2026), the project acronym EPICUR-SHAPE-IT represents “EPICUR Shaping Higher Education in Transition”.

[...][as well as] train the EPICUR teaching staff how to deploy the pedagogical design of EPICUR curricular learning experiences and services.” (EPICUR-SHAPE-IT Grant Agreement, 2022, p.84).

In fulfilment of the related tasks, milestones and deliverables, a dedicated Task Team from across the EPICUR Alliance has been collaborating in the co-creation of the EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (short name: EPiC TLC).

As per its (revised) Terms of Reference (EPICUR 4.3 Task Team, 2023 & 2024, p. 1) “The EPiC TLC aims to promote purposeful development in teaching and learning. Sharing experiences and resources of local teaching support units, it shall create synergistic, Alliance-wide support structures for teaching (development) staff involved with EPICUR learning offers. The EPiC TLC shall be a focal point for international and intercultural teaching, supporting academics in adopting innovative teaching practices consistent with Alliance Values and goals. Based on the commitment of the EPICUR partner universities to work together towards the common goal of enhancing teaching and learning quality, the EPiC TLC is designed to be an online network with representatives from all partners, including local teaching support units.”

3.1. Target groups

To meet its objectives and fulfil its purposes, the offers and activities developed in the context of the EPiC TLC shall serve several target groups involved with teaching and learning development and provision at the EPICUR partners, specifically educators, teaching support unit staff as well as administrative staff concerned with the provision of educational offers.

“The EPiC TLC is to provide support, materials and opportunity for exchange for individuals involved with providing teaching. The EPiC TLC will primarily provide offers for teaching staff as well as teaching support staff involved in EPICUR teaching and learning activities. For EPiC TLC purposes, “EPICUR teaching staff” refers to everyone engaged with teaching at one of the EPICUR

partner universities. That includes, but is not limited to, full professors, assistant professors, lecturers, scientific staff with teaching responsibilities, and students when they are serving a tutoring or teaching role.

The EPiC TLC may also be a source of information and inspiration for anyone interested in (further developing) teaching and learning practices in higher education. In the EPiC TLC's virtual community of practice, special interest groups for and with students can be provided, to allow for exchange and good practice sharing.

Other administrative staff involved with teaching organisation (student data administrators etc.) may also benefit from specific resources such as MOOCs, e.g., developed in Task 3.8 Supporting digital skills and competences for EPiCUREans which shall be accessible via the EPiC TLC.” (EPiC TLC Terms of Reference, EPiCUR 4.3 Task Team, 2024, p. 5).

3.2. Added Value of a Joint Teaching and Learning Centre

The establishment of a joint EPiC Teaching and Learning Centre adds value to the Alliance and therefore to each partner by creating a centralised support structure that advantages the strengths of local support units and fosters cross-institutional collaboration.

As a central service unit, the EPiC TLC may contribute to quality development of the Alliance as exemplified in the European Framework for the Comprehensive Quality Assurance of European Universities. Particularly, as the offers and activities focus on “cross-disciplinary approaches, innovative pedagogies, digital technologies” ([EUniQ, n.d., p.3](#)). Michael Gaebel and Thérèse Zhang have suggested that “institutional strategies and learning and teaching centres are mutually supportive, and that the centres (and similar structures) are an important resource for strategy dissemination and implementation, as well as possibly for their further development. The centres can support and link individuals, and initiatives of faculties and departments, as well as contribute

to the development of dynamic institutional learning and teaching communities.” ([European University Association, 2018, p. 19](#)).

A key element of the EPiC TLC is its focus on internationalisation. Thus, it complements rather than duplicates local support offers at the EPICUR partner universities, providing added value. There are benefits for educators, teaching support and development units, as well as administrative staff concerned with enabling educational experiences.

Importantly, the development of intercultural competencies among teaching staff and students may be fostered, inter alia, as low-threshold opportunities are provided to learn about others’ experiences and approaches and share (and contrast) perspectives.

Through the aspects illustrated below, incentives for continuous quality development are provided (compare, e.g., [Ryan & Deci, 2020](#)) catered to teaching (support) staff across the EPICUR Alliance.

3.2.1. Facilitation of (International) Collaboration

Via the EPiC TLC, members of all EPICUR partners can access a network and find suitable collaborators to jointly pursue innovation in teaching and learning. The EPiC TLC facilitates a networked community through its virtual space as well as through training offers and activities, providing collaboration tools, shared resources, and events for exchange of knowledge and best practices in teaching and learning. Its activities and (virtual) infrastructure allow teaching support staff, teaching staff, and other stakeholders involved with teaching and learning across the Alliance to connect. In alignment with principles of student-centred learning and teaching, the involvement of students is promoted, fostering a collaborative educational environment.

3.2.2. Sharing Resources

The EPiC TLC facilitates the creation and sharing of innovative teaching practices and resources through its user-friendly online platform. It thus supports the sharing of best practices, including the development and dissemination of Open Educational Resources (OER), enhancing low-threshold access to high-quality educational materials across the Alliance.

3.2.3. Professionalisation of International Teaching Competence

The EPiC TLC provides high-quality training and professional development opportunities tailored to the needs of international higher education settings for teaching staff across the Alliance.

Through the EPiC TLC's teaching professionalisation programme, certification and recognition for competence development in international teaching and learning will be fostered across the Alliance. Thus, continuous quality development of (international) teaching and learning at all partners is further supported. Moreover, academic staff across the Alliance are supported in their individual professional development opportunities.

3.2.4. Fostering the Sense of Belonging in the Community of Practice

By focusing on and thus placing emphasis on teaching and learning in the context of universities, the EPiC TLC fosters the development of a Community of Practice. Most importantly, through the activities and networking opportunities it facilitates a sense of belonging for individuals across the Alliance who care about providing high quality education.

3.2.5. Supporting the EPiCURean Learning Experience

In the EPiC TLC, teaching (support) staff may find information and inspiration on how to internationalise their teaching offers. Guidance and practical implementation information are provided to encourage and facilitate Alliance-wide teaching and learning offers. The EPiC TLC promotes teaching practices aligned with EPiCUR's international educational principles, to foster the development of learning offers that are intercultural, inclusive, interactive, interdisciplinary, and innovative.

3.2.6. Provision of Multilingual Teaching Development Support

Via the EPiC TLC, teaching staff across the Alliance can access information, a network and support in languages beyond the local languages. This is especially important to, e.g., visiting researchers who also teach and often cannot benefit from teaching development offers at their hosting universities as those are typically provided in the local languages.

3.3. Co-Creating an Alliance-wide Service Unit: The Task Team

Benefitting from experiences made in EPiCUR's pilot phase, a lot of attention was paid to co-creation and representation of the partners. Therefore, efforts were made to maximise synergies while also evaluating the usability and acceptance of the new Centre across the Alliance. To this end, the 4.3 Task Lead paid much attention to forming an intrinsically motivated cross-institutional 'Task Team' for the establishment of what should ultimately become EPiCUR's first central service unit.

The EPiC TLC Task Team is chaired by the Task Lead located at the University of Freiburg and composed of representatives from all nine partner universities, representing the local teaching support structures. Most of these representatives are rooted in teaching support units, either as heads or as project staff. The Task Team includes people with current EPiCUR and/or local

teaching experience as well as individuals with strategic roles in EPiCUR. This diverse composition ensures that the EPiC TLC benefits from a wide range of perspectives and expertise, fostering a collaborative environment that supports innovative and inclusive teaching practices across the Alliance. Members of the EPiC TLC Task Team play a pivotal role in facilitating a two-way flow of information between their local teaching support units and the cross-Alliance Task Team itself.

The Task Team met for the first time (online) in March 2023 and has since convened once per month for 1 ½ hours to co-create the EPiC TLC.

Reflecting the successful completion of the conceptual phase, as of September 2024, the Team's meeting pattern will be shifted to be bi-monthly. Meetings are prepared and documented by the Task Lead and during the meetings the Task Team shares updates, works out content, provides feedback, and takes decisions on the working level with regard to the (co-creative development of the) EPiC TLC. Final validation of outcomes takes place in the respective specified EPiCUR bodies.

3.4. Methodology: Approaches, Procedures and Principles Applied in (Establishing) the EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC)

Throughout the process of conceptualising and establishing the EPiC TLC, co-creation, user-orientation, continuous quality development and related formative assessment procedures have served as guiding principles.

In the Task Team, a 'flipped meeting' concept was implemented, which allows members to prepare content asynchronously according to their own schedules. This approach enables the synchronous meetings to be primarily focused on discussion, decision making and co-creation phases.

Methods adapted from Design Thinking are utilised in the co-creative processes that have led to the successful reaching of Milestones (as per the Grant

Agreement) like the EPiC TLC's Terms of Reference (see Annex 1). They have also yielded outputs that go beyond the tasks proposed in the EPICUR-SHAPE-IT Grant Agreement such as the celebratory opening event of the EPiC TLC with involvement of teaching support unit representatives across the EPICUR Alliance (see Section 3.5).

The conception and inception of the EPiC TLC originated in the Grant Agreement as described above. With the beginning of the second funding period (November 2022), the Task Lead dedicated to the development of the joint "Teaching and Learning Centre" for EPICUR set to work. The Task is co-led by two representatives located in the University of Freiburg's departments of E-Learning and Higher Education Didactics, which may well illustrate the approach of employing complementary expertise to create synergies in establishing a joint Teaching and Learning Centre.

To be able to provide a needs-based offering and gather perspectives beyond the Alliance-wide Task Team, responses and reactions were collected from various stakeholders throughout the conception and creation to ensure usability of the joint Teaching and Learning Centre (cf. following chapters for examples). Such formative evaluation measures will continue to be used to ensure the ongoing quality development and usability of the EPiC TLC's virtual space, its activities, and training offers.

3.5. Overview: Major Steps and Milestones in (Establishing) the EPiC TLC

Between November 2022 and September 2024, the EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) was conceptualised, implemented, and launched for teaching (support) staff across all EPICUR partner universities. The key milestones in this process include:

Concept and Terms of Reference: The Task Lead initiated the concept for a joint Teaching and Learning Centre, which was refined through input from Alliance-wide staff and external feedback. By June 2023, the Task Team had finalised and

submitted the Terms of Reference (ToR) as Milestone 25 (compare Annex 1), outlining the Centre's objectives, structures, and procedures, while ensuring alignment with EPiCUR's International Educational Values (see Figure 1).

Name, Logo, and Branding: The Task Team collaboratively chose the name "EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning" and the abbreviation "EPiC TLC" to reflect the Centre's purpose and connection to the EPiCUR Alliance. A logo was co-created (see Figure 2), symbolising the joint efforts of the nine partner universities in fostering innovation in international teaching and learning.



Figure 1: EPiCUR's International Educational Values



Figure 2: EPiC TLC logo

Virtual Space Development: Based on a detailed needs analysis, the EPiC TLC's virtual space was developed on the Virtual Campus Learning Platform (VCLP). This space was designed to provide resources, events, and opportunities for collaboration among teaching (support) staff, with continuous feedback from beta users informing its final design.

Grand Opening Event: On February 23, 2024, the EPiC TLC was officially launched in a virtual event attended by over 180 participants (see Figure 3). The event featured insights from Alliance leaders, a virtual tour of the Centre's space, and a symbolic ribbon-cutting at all partner universities. The opening event was rounded off by the first EPiC EduTalk (see Section 5.1.1 Pilot Events & Activity examples).

Are you interested in innovation and collaboration in (international) university education?



The EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning hosts a vibrant international community of university teaching (support) staff, providing opportunities for exchange, professional growth and a dynamic pool of resources.

Join us for the online opening of the EPiC TLC and enjoy:

- Perspectives on a joint Centre for Teaching & Learning in the context of a European University Alliance
- An online tour and the first chance to explore the EPiC TLC yourself
- The opportunity to engage with international teaching (support) staff
- The first 2024 EPiC EduTalk

Be part of our Community of Practice in Teaching & Learning!

Register here:
<https://ufr.link/epictlc-opening>

Problems or questions regarding event registration?
tlc@epicur.edu.eu

23rd FEBRUARY 2024
2.00-3.30 PM (CET)
ONLINE

EPiCUR CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING
GRAND OPENING!

EPiCUR EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

Co-funded by the European Union

Figure 3: Invitation to the opening of the EPiC TLC

Community Event Programme: A schedule of seven regular event formats was developed based on feedback from the Task Team and pilot-tested to engage and support the Community of Practice across the EPiCUR Alliance (compare Chapter 5 Let's connect!: Activities by and for the Community of Practice).

These milestones highlight the collaborative and co-creative process that underpinned the successful establishment of the EPiC TLC, providing a foundation for continuous development and long-term impact.

3.6. Challenges Encountered: Obstacles and Opportunities

Involving universities of different sizes and contexts, spread across Europe, the EPiC TLC is established in the context of nine different local teaching support structures, their respective processes and resources (compare Chapter 4 Implementation and Elements of the EPiC TLC). Naturally, this entails both challenges and chances.

The first challenge encountered was engaging a team from across the Alliance with whom to co-create what was to become an Alliance-wide central service unit. From experiences in EPiCUR's pilot phase, the Task Lead was well aware of the importance of such a team and thus, inter alia, employed the EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT Kick-off event in Strasbourg (February 2023) to engage interested stakeholders from across the Alliance, e.g., via in-person workshops.

Against the backdrop of differently timed organisational and hiring processes at partner universities at the beginning of EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT, it appeared not feasible to co-create and submit the Terms of Reference for a joint Teaching and Learning Centre in Month 6 of the project (March, 2023) as foreseen by the Grant Agreement. Reacting to the perceived mismatch of Milestone delivery date and the real work to be carried out to achieve consensus on the set-up of the TLC as a central unit/service, this Milestone was postponed from Month 6 to Month 9, following the suggestion of the EPiCUR Project Manager. Accordingly, the ToR were successfully submitted in June 2023 and later validated by the respective bodies.

Based on discussions within the Alliance, the challenge of interrelated Milestones and Deliverables to be produced by different dates was met by clarifying in the ToR: "The establishment of the EPiCUR TLC is work in progress and the EPiCUR TLC's offers and services are to be developed, implemented, evaluated and, accordingly, optimised in EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT. Moreover, offers and processes of the EPiCUR TLC are interrelated with other developments and tasks, e.g., as specified in the EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT proposal. Therefore, these ToR are subject to changes reflecting EPiCUR's advancements. Thus, the ToR shall be subject to annual revision and amendment" (EPiCUR 4.3 Task Team, 2023, p. 21).

A substantial challenge identified with the Task Team early on was to foster acceptance of the offers and developments within the individual universities, specifically within their respective teaching support units. Along with appreciation for the development of teaching support offers, particularly for international teaching and learning, scepticism was encountered due to the project-based nature of the funding. Questions were raised with respect to

sustainability of offers and associated cost-benefit-relations of investing (human) resources into the building of a joint Teaching and Learning Centre.

This challenge was approached by efforts to map and reach out to these units and continuously inviting them to participate, e.g., as members of the Task Team. Accordingly, the ToR also specified that “All EPICUR partner universities will have the opportunity to both contribute to and benefit from the joint EPICUR TLC. It involves members of local teaching support units to ensure that the EPICUR TLC’s activities and offers complement and enhance local teaching support units’ work, rather than duplicating it” (EPICUR 4.3 Task Team, 2023, p. 4).

Due to the transnational purpose and nature of the endeavour and limited resources in terms of time and financial resources, the Task Team has to rely almost exclusively on virtual collaboration. To allow for efficient co-construction, solutions for challenges related to efficient communication had to be found. Moreover, documentation, communication, and institutional integration of developments needed to be carefully considered, e.g., because EPICUR project staff is subject to fluctuations and does not always include the heads of local teaching support units. Initially, a virtual collaborative space was set up on EPICURUS. Having tested that for a while, the Task Team decided to resort exclusively to the dedicated chat group and folders implemented on Microsoft (MS) Teams (guest accounts for all partners, hosted in Strasbourg) for all Task Team collaboration and communication. Outcome protocols of Task Team meetings are additionally sent out via email, as not all Task Team members have reliable access to MS Teams.

Another challenge related to a central service unit is communication of developments and offers to reach the target groups at the nine partner universities. Please see Chapter 8 Communication and Public Relations for approaches being taken to meet this challenge. As described in the previous section, attention was paid to creating low-threshold offers guided by user-oriented design principles throughout the conception and establishment of the EPiC TLC. Thus, for instance, explanatory videos were produced, guiding users through the different offers and implemented them in the EPiC TLC (compare

Section 4.3 and Chapters 5-7 of this report). Crucial to the ongoing development and implementation of offers, as well as their acceptance at the partner universities remains the question of sustainability beyond the EPICUR-SHAPE-IT funding phase (compare Chapter 9 Evaluation).

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND ELEMENTS OF THE EPiC TLC

Thanks to the motivated cross-Alliance Task Team and efficient collaboration procedures, the Terms of Reference (ToR), name and logo for the central service unit were successfully co-created. In fulfilment of the aims as outlined in the EPICUR-SHAPE-It Grant Agreement as well as the purposes delineated in the co- created Terms of Reference, the EPiC TLC has been established as a virtual central service unit.

It has been set up to provide support, materials and opportunity for exchange for individuals involved with providing teaching. Teaching staff, teaching support staff and all else interested in (further developing) teaching and learning practices in higher education shall be able to refer to it as a source of information and inspiration. The EPiC TLC has been implemented to offer a virtual space and activities to learn from each other and with one another, to share good practices and resources, and to collaborate on projects to promote EPiCUREan teaching and learning practices across EPICUR universities.

Created based on the ToR, a thorough needs analysis as well as user feedback, the EPiC TLC has been welcoming teaching (support) staff from across the Alliance to join since February 23, 2024.

In the following, the EPiC TLC, its offers and activities as aligned with its aims and purposes will be introduced.

4.1. Synergies: Central and Local Teaching Support

By establishing a central Teaching and Learning Centre, EPiCUR leverages the strengths of its local support structures to create a robust, collaborative, and innovative environment for teaching and learning across the Alliance.

The EPiC TLC connects a diverse array of local teaching and learning support structures at EPiCUR partner universities. Each institution within the Alliance has units and departments tailored to their specific needs, providing a rich ecosystem for educational support.

4.1.1. Teaching Support Structures at EPiCUR Partners

The following overview is based on a mapping of local teaching support structures conducted in February 2023 among the partner universities. Representatives from six out of the nine partners responded to the survey, and more information was later added to illustrate the current landscape of teaching support within the Alliance. Target groups of teaching support units across universities are:

- University teachers, specifically professors
- Teaching support staff, including department teaching coordinators and educational engineers
- Administrative staff involved in teaching and learning processes
- Students, especially those involved in teaching or tutoring roles

The units providing such support are listed in the following:

- **Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland**
 - Contact: <https://amu.edu.pl/universytet/wyszukiwarka-pracownikow/osoba?id=10000697&alias=Agnieszka-Kamieszniak-Machniewska>
- **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece**

- Teaching and Learning Centre:
<https://kedima.auth.gr/en/homepage-2-eng/>

- **Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany**

Departments:

- E-Learning / Digital Teaching and Learning: Focus on digital advancements in teaching:
<https://elearning.studium.kit.edu/english/index.php>
- Higher Education Didactics / Pedagogy: Pedagogical support for teaching staff: <https://www.peba.kit.edu/1129.php>

Networks:

- Hochschuldidaktikzentrum Baden-Württemberg: A state-wide network, providing an ac credited certification programme for higher education didactics.
- **University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands**
 - UvA Teaching and Learning Centres: <https://tlc.uva.nl/en/>
- **University of Freiburg, Germany**

Departments:

- E-Learning Department (at Central IT Services) focused on digital teaching development: https://www.rz.uni-freiburg.de/en/services/elearning?set_language=en
- Department of Innovation and Quality in Teaching comprising three areas: Higher Education Didactics and Digital Teaching and Learning Development, Teaching Strategy and Digitalisation, Quality Management and Accreditation: <https://uni-freiburg.de/universitaet/verwaltung/innovation-und-qualitaet-in-der-lehre-iq/>

Networks:

- Hochschuldidaktikzentrum Baden-Württemberg: A state-wide network, providing an accredited certification programme for higher education didactics.
- Hochschulforum Digitalisierung: National network for digital teaching and learning.
- Campus Community Network: Additional support networks.

- **University of Haute-Alsace, France**

Departments:

- Centre for Teaching and Learning: Central hub for teaching support: https://www.learning-center.uha.fr/opac/article/lapage-dediee-a-lacompagnement-a-la-pedagogie/uha_appui
- E-Learning / Digital Teaching and Learning: Focused on digital teaching enhancements. Networks:
- ANSTIA: National association supporting TICE and audio-visual teaching services.

- **University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria**

Departments:

- Centre for Teaching and Learning: Central teaching support unit: <https://boku.ac.at/en/lehrentwicklung/e-learning-and-didactics/didactics>
- Division E-Learning and Didactics: Digital and didactic teaching support: <https://boku.ac.at/en/lehrentwicklung/e-learning-and-didactics/e-learning>

- **University of Southern Denmark, Denmark**

Departments:

- Centre for Teaching and Learning: Comprehensive support for teaching: <https://www.sdu.dk/en/sduup>
- Media Centre: Enhances digital teaching.

- SDU RIO: Careers and Employability Consultants. Networks:
- Danish Network for Educational Development in Higher Education (DUN): National network supporting educational development.

- **University of Strasbourg, France**

Departments:

- IDIP (Institut de Développement et d'Innovation Pédagogiques): Centralised support for digital teaching and higher education didactics: <https://idip.unistra.fr/>

4.1.2. Joining Forces: Complementary Offers

The EPiC TLC functions as a central hub that integrates and complements the efforts of local support structures at partner universities. This integration ensures that the activities and offers of the EPiC TLC are synergistic rather than duplicative as illustrated in Figure 4.

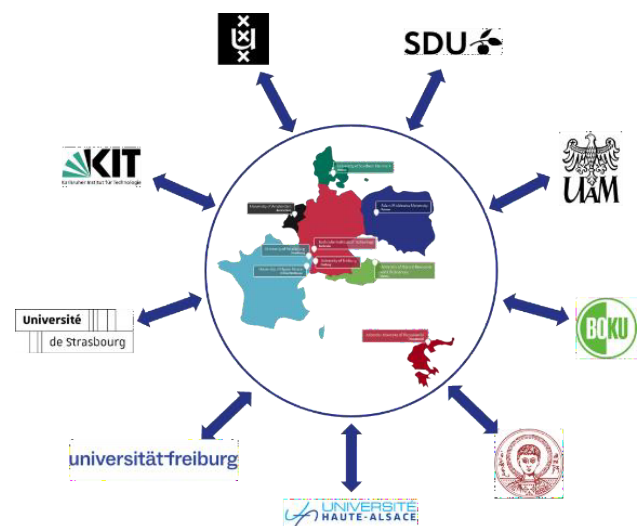


Figure 4: Illustration of synergistic opportunities in the EPiC TLC

Key aspects of this comprise:

- **Complementary Role:** The EPiC TLC is not designed to replace the tasks and operational work of local support structures. Instead, it complements their efforts, particularly regarding internationalisation. For instance, teaching (support) staff shall be facilitated regarding their teaching and learning with international groups of students and generally, English-language training offers shall be provided. This allows local units to continue focusing on their specialised support roles in local contexts while benefiting from the broader, Alliance-wide resources and initiatives provided by the EPiC TLC.

- **Alignment with Local Units:** Local teaching support units contribute to and benefit from the resources, networking activities and trainings provided by the EpiC TLC. Offers from local units are curated so that if aligned with EpiCUR's objectives and educational principles they may be opened for Alliance-wide access.
- **International Community of Practice:** Through the EpiC TLC's virtual community, teaching support staff and faculty across the Alliance can collaborate, share experiences, and participate in joint training and professional development activities.
- **Resource and Expertise Sharing:** Local units share their developed resources and expertise through the EpiC TLC's online platform, making them accessible to the entire Alliance. EpiC TLC provides opportunities for joint projects and peer support, enhancing the capacity of local units.
- **Continuous Improvement:** The EpiC TLC's culture of continuous improvement benefits from feedback from local teaching support and development units and users. Members of local teaching support units contribute (as Task Team members or feedback providers) to the EpiC TLC's efforts to continuously adapt offers and services. Thus, efforts are made to meet evolving needs in the Community of Practice.

4.2. (Continuous) Co-Creation

As outlined in in Chapter 3, the process of creating the EpiC TLC was guided by principles of co-creation, user-orientation and continuous quality development. For instance, during co-creation phases of the flipped Task Team meetings, user needs that should be considered during the establishment of the EpiC TLC's virtual space were collected and discussed. One of those virtually carried out collections is exemplified in Figure 5.

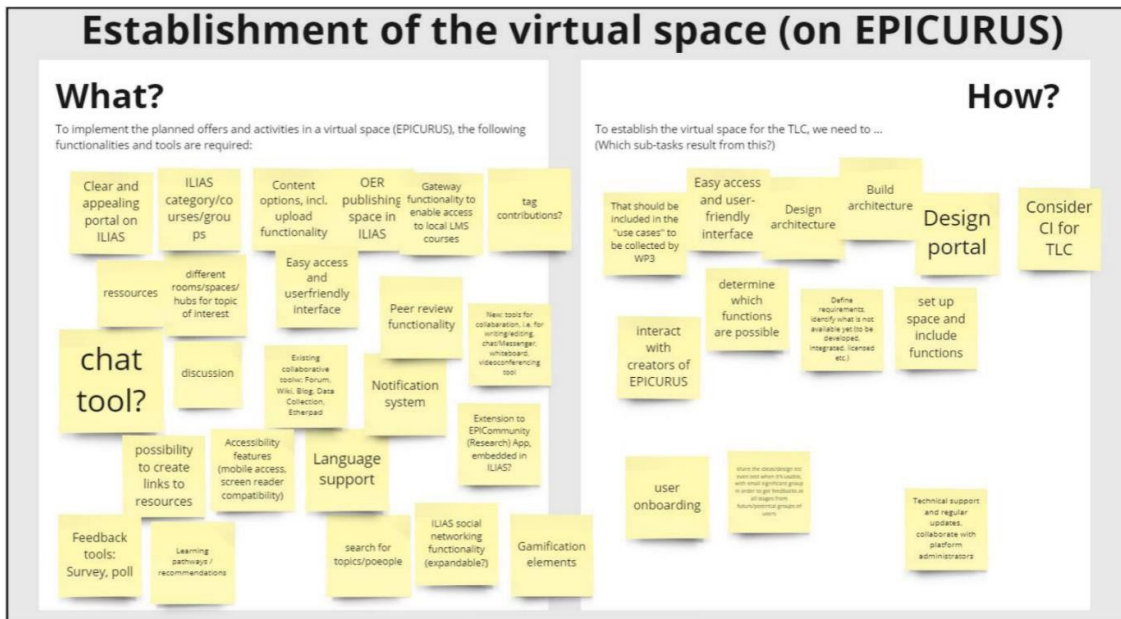


Figure 5: Illustration of co-creation of the EPiC TLC's virtual space: Task Team collection of needs and opportunities

The Task Team's dedication to user-orientation and co-creation as well as continuous quality development as guiding principles (compare Section 3.4) have not ended with the EPiC TLC's official inauguration in February, 2024. The EPiC TLC is understood to be an evolving service, intended to grow in response to the contributions and needs of the Community of Practice, i.e., its users. Thus, offers continue to be developed by integrating user feedback.

For instance, at the EPICUR Forum in Mulhouse (June, 2024), the Task Lead conducted workshops during which the EPiC TLC was introduced and participants' feedback on experiences and potential additional needs were collected. Figure 6 depicts a workshop slide with questions to (new) users. The structures and information provided on the virtual space were subsequently adapted accordingly.

Over to you: Let's explore!



- How can the EPiC TLC support you in internationalising your teaching or program?
- What did you miss that would further support you in your endeavors?



Figure 6: User feedback for continuous quality development:

Moreover, new ways for teachers to find collaboration partners were developed (compare information on the *CoTeachConnector* in Section 5.4). On the virtual platform of the EPiC TLC, users are also encouraged to give feedback, e.g., via the message displayed on the landing page “Please reach out to tlc@epicur.edu.eu with questions, contribution ideas or requests concerning the EPiC TLC”.

4.3. Closed Virtual Space: Platform, Features & Membership

The virtual space of the EPiC TLC is located on the Virtual Campus Learning Platform (VCLP), which is an ILIAS (v8.13) installation hosted by EPICUR partner Karlsruhe Institute for Technology (KIT). The VCLP can be accessed exclusively by members of the EPICUR Alliance via Single Sign-On and is thus easily accessible for anyone in the EPICUR Alliance with their regular university login data. As an Open Source Learning Management System, ILIAS provides a flexible and customisable learning and working environment, a versatile open knowledge platform with integrated tools for course management, content authoring and collaboration.

4.3.1. Three Main Purposes: Let’s Connect, Explore, and Grow!

From the co-creation of the ToR, it became evident early on that through the EPiC TLC, teaching staff and teaching support staff across the Alliance shall be provided with opportunities and tools to foster quality, innovation, and internationalisation in teaching (competence) development. Accordingly, the three major purposes of the EPiC TLC derived with the Task Team were, respectively, to facilitate:

- Establishment of a Community of Practice (CoP) in teaching and learning,
- Sharing of resources for EPICURian teaching & learning,
- Provision of professionalisation opportunities for EPICUR teaching staff.

The EPiC TLC's virtual space was set up to reflect these three purposes in three equally designed and interconnected "areas":

- ***Let's connect!*** fosters the establishment of a CoP. It is set up to facilitate exchange of ideas and experiences, network, and collaborate.
- ***Let's explore!*** allows teaching (support) staff to find and share information and resources on teaching and learning.
- ***Let's grow!*** allows teaching staff to engage in (international) teaching competence development offers.

4.3.2. Platform Architecture

To meet the requirements of the Alliance-wide EPiC TLC, a course room providing member administration was created and designed on the VCLP. Apart from the landing page, the course room consists of three "folders" as container elements for the three main areas (*Let's connect!*, *Let's explore!* and *Let's grow!*). Each of these areas is designed according to its specific needs and includes further container elements such as groups or sub-folders.

A button bar is located on each page, allowing easy navigation and switching between the three areas and the main page. Overarching and cross-sectional content elements can be found on the landing page and are specifically linked in the respective sections.

4.3.3. Platform Design

To visualise the affiliation of the EPiC TLC to EPiCUR, the underlying ILIAS content style was developed and implemented in close alignment with the EPiCUR CI (corporate identity). By using visual page design elements such as column layout, recognisable headers, expandable/collapsible elements and object blocks, the targeted use of photos, videos and icons as well as a deliberate and recognisable arrangement of elements on each page, an attractive website-

like page design was created to ensure pleasant user- experience and easy navigation for the target group (see Annex 2 for illustration).

4.3.4. ILIAS Objects and their Applications

The EpiC TLC platform leverages a variety of ILIAS objects to facilitate a cohesive, user-friendly environment that promotes collaboration, knowledge sharing, and continuous growth within the community.

Key tools and their respective applications are:

- **Forum:** The General Forum serves as a central hub for communication within the CoP. It is used for posting important messages to members, as well as facilitating discussions and answering questions. This tool is essential for fostering community engagement and support, allowing users to stay informed and exchange knowledge efficiently.
- **Blog:** The Community Blog keeps everyone informed about the latest trends and developments. Users are encouraged to contribute their insights, experiences, and updates, making it a collaborative space for sharing valuable information and fostering a sense of community.
- **Etherpad:** Etherpads are utilised for real-time collaborative editing and brainstorming. The item is particularly useful for:
 - Suggestions: Providing a space for members to share and discuss new ideas.
 - Wishlists: Collecting and prioritising ideas for future collaborative teaching projects and potential Special Interest Groups (SIGs).
- **Data Collection:** The Data Collection object is used in several ways for collecting and managing data:
 - *Who is Who:* This tool allows community members to (voluntarily) introduce themselves and get an overview of fellow EpiC TLC members. It allows users to filter the database to find and learn more about specific individuals. It thus helps members expand their networks and connect with like- minded peers.

- *CoTeachConnector*: Aimed at facilitating co-teaching initiatives, this tool allows community members to (voluntarily) enter a search for collaboration subjects and formats. It thus helps in identifying potential collaborators and forming teaching partnerships.
- *Resource Repository*: A comprehensive database where members can browse, contribute, and access pedagogic and didactic resources, ensuring a rich repository of shared knowledge.
- **Group**: Each group space can include a polling tool for quick surveys, upload folders for file sharing, a Forum, Etherpads, a BigBlueButton (BBB) room for video conferencing, and OnlyOffice for collaborative editing of documents (texts, tables, presentations). The Group object supports various collaborative efforts, including:
 - Special Interest Groups (SIGs): Focused groups where members can delve into specific topics.
 - Collaborative Teaching Projects (CTPs): Projects that allow members to collaborate on teaching initiatives.
- **Survey**: Surveys are primarily used for event registration purposes, efficiently streamlining the process of collecting attendee information and preferences.
- **Wiki**: The Wiki object is used for a comprehensive guide to designing and developing EPiCUR courses. It offers guidance and resources to support course development, providing a centralised knowledge base for educators.
- **Course Link**: To facilitate continuous learning and professional development, course links in the Let's grow! area provide direct access to various educational resources and modules, either located on the VCLP or on the respective Learning Management Systems of EPiCUR partner universities opening up their training offers to EPiCUR teaching staff.

4.3.5. Landing Page: Welcome to the EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching & Learning (EPiC TLC)!

When members enter the EPiC TLC, they are greeted as depicted in the following screenshot (Fig. 7):

Welcome to the EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching & Learning (EPiC TLC)!

As a service unit for teachers, educational developers and teaching support staff across the EPiCUR alliance, the EPiC TLC invites you to explore and enjoy resources, opportunities for professional growth, community building and (international) collaboration. Let's shape it together to advance internationalization and innovation in higher education!

The EPiC TLC is a closed space located on the EPiCUR InterUniversityCampus, which can only be accessed by members of the EPiCUR alliance. In this virtual space, you will find three interconnected areas, offering gateways to curated resources that inspire, professional development opportunities that empower and community engagement that connects.

Watch the short video on the right of the screen and experience our warm welcome to the EPiC TLC's Community of Practice. Join us in shaping the future of joy- and meaningful international teaching and learning!

Figure 7: Screenshot of the welcome message on the EPiC TLC landing page

On the landing page, users also find a screencast explaining how to navigate the EPiC TLC's virtual space and its respective offers. News such as upcoming events are announced. The page also features the Who-Is-Who allowing members to introduce themselves. Under "Contact and Support", members are invited to share questions and ideas via email to the EPiC TLC function address and find Q&A, join discussions and share insights with peers in the EPiC TLC Forum. Moreover, by clicking on the logo of their home university, they are directed to the webpage of their local teaching support units. On the landing page, the three areas of the EPiC TLC are briefly introduced and interlinked for easy navigation.

5. LET'S CONNECT!: ACTIVITIES BY AND FOR THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Serving the purpose of establishing of a Community of Practice (CoP) in teaching and learning across EPiCUR, Let's connect! comprises activities and tools for networking and collaboration. The interested reader is referred to Annex 2 for screenshots of the EPiC TLC's virtual space.

5.1. Community Events

To foster the establishment of a Community of Practice and enhance the visibility of developed offers and activities, the EPiC TLC Community Event Programme has been co-created by the EPiC TLC Task Team based on feedback from colleagues collected in meetings and workshops (compare Section 3.4). It includes seven different event formats to be regularly offered. They shall facilitate exchange and collaboration for the main target groups of the EPiC TLC.

Table 1: EPiC TLC event programme

Event series	Target group(s)	Focus on	Event format	Fre- quency	Length / duration	Targeted no. of Participants	Offered by
EPiCUR Forum workshop(s)	All, tbd adapted to focus	tbd, depending on Forum theme	In person	1x / year	90 – 180 minutes	Max. 30	EPiC TLC lead & Forum organisers
EPiC TLC Network Roundtable	Local teaching support unit	Strengthening EPiC TLC network & Featuring EPiCUR	Hybrid	2x / year	2 half days (2x3 hours)	Unlimited	
	Heads & staff; potentially+ local academic staff	T&L issues; potentially integrate presentation of EPiCUR education					
SIG Moderator Meeting	SIG moderator	Reporting / Exchange / Q&A	Online	2x / year	60 minutes	According to number of SIGs	EPiC TLC lead
EPiC EduCafé	Educators	Networking / CTP facilitation (focus on priority areas and/or teaching support)	Online	4x / year	60 / 30 minutes	Max. 20	
EPiC TLC (Task) Team meetings	T4.3 Task Team	EPiC TLC operation and development	Online	6x / year	90 minutes	1-2 members per institution	EPiC TLC lead
Special Interest Group (SIG) Meetings	Educators and/or teaching support staff	Acc. to SIG goals	Online	tbd	tbd	tbd	SIG moderators

In Let's connect!, under Community Events, members are invited to “Join us and participate in the upcoming events of the EPiCUR Community of Practice in Teaching and Learning to get to know and network with other educators and educational (competence) developers!”. Here, the EPiC TLC's activities (including but not limited to the regular events described in Table 1) are announced and registration to the events is enabled. Moreover, members of the EPiC TLC find documentation of events they may have missed.

5.1.1. Pilot Events & Activity examples: EPiC EduTalk & Café

Starting with the grand opening of the EPiC TLC, all event formats except the “EPiC TLC Network Roundtable” have been piloted. Examples will be provided in the following and considerations concluded from the pilots derived.

EPiC EduTalks are conceptualised to provide low-threshold opportunities to receive innovative impulses on teaching & learning for inspiration and as opportunities for exchange. Four times per year, invited speakers shall briefly present their experiences with an innovative teaching and learning offer followed by questions and idea exchange of the interested audience.

Via *EPiC EduCafés* educators from across the Alliance shall be enabled to meet online and exchange experiences. All interested teaching (support/development) staff in the EPiCUR Alliance are welcome to join to share the joy of teaching and learning in the border-crossing Community of Practice.

The first *EPiC EduTalk* was offered to the audience of the EPiC TLC's Opening Event. In a 10-minute impulse, Dr. Steven Randall of the University College Freiburg presented structural aspects of and experiences made from a co-teacher perspective on the EPiCUR educational offer “Collaboration across cultures, a case-method approach”. The audience was invited to ask questions and join the discussion on opportunities for internationalisation and innovation through such educational offers.

Based on the variety of questions received, ideas raised and interest in sharing materials expressed by audience members, it was concluded that EPiC EduTalks appear to be a useful format for inspiring and engaging teaching staff and thus serving the development of the EPiC TLC's Community of Practice in teaching and learning.

Following considerations voiced during the event programme conceptualisation (e.g., limit the number of events in order not to overwhelm the target group), future EPiC EduTalks shall be combined with the EPiC EduCafé format to allow for low-threshold exchange (over lunch) between educators across the Alliance, potentially inspired by the previous impulse and discussion on a featured innovative teaching and learning offer.

The next EPiC EduTalk & Café is scheduled for September 11, 2024. Titled "*Teaching Sustainability: Using the SDGs as Building Blocks to Address Students as Change Makers*" this EPiC EduTalk relates to EPiCUR's priority area *sustainable transformation*. Educators are invited to "bring your lunch, and join us online to share the joy of teaching and learning in our border-crossing community of practice!"

5.2. Special Interest Groups

Facilitating connections of teaching (support) staff across the Alliance, Let's connect! provides opportunities for Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to be formed and to collaborate. These groups focus on specific topics in teaching and learning and bring together individuals from across the Alliance who share a topic of interest and want to exchange and collaborate. Members are invited to "Join the group(s) that sound(s) interesting to you and get in touch! Share your thoughts and experiences or work jointly on ideas and developments!"

Example of active SIGs formed in the first months since the opening of the EPiC TLC include:

- English and other language medium instruction

- Open Educational Resources & Practices (OER/OEP)
- Language Teaching and Learning – Collaborative, online, international learning (COIL)

The SIGs determine their activities based on their individual needs and aims. The EPiC TLC Task Lead provides support in establishing the SIGs through moderator briefings and meetings to be held twice a year.

5.3. Collaborative Teaching Practice Spaces

Collaborative Teaching Practice Spaces invite teaching staff to “connect with other educators from across the EPiCUR Alliance and plan co-teaching. Here, you can meet and share course materials and ideas!” This is a crucial resource for co-teaching, as different universities do not usually share a common collaborative space and thus materials are typically sent back and forth via email or shared in online spaces with insufficient GDPR compliance and/or data security. The EPiC TLC’s Collaborative Teaching Practice Spaces provide co-teachers from different partner universities with a shared virtual space, including folders to up- and download materials, a virtual meeting room that can be accessed with one click, shared collaborative text- editing options (OnlyOffice), as well as an Etherpad and discussion forum for asynchronous exchange.

5.4. CoTeachConnector

In various contexts with stakeholders ranging from international office staff and project coordinators to individual teachers, a need was identified to match educators from across the Alliance with others for co- teaching and other collaboration purposes. After extensive research and several meetings taken with creators and users of potential “matching tools” to be integrated in the EPiC TLC, in July 2024, a custom tool was created to fit the purpose and was integrated it into *Let’s connect!*. In another co-creation process, it was named the *CoTeachConnector*. Via the *CoTeachConnector* (implemented as a Data Collection with filter functions) EPiC TLC members are invited to “Find peers for teaching

collaborations across the EPICUR Alliance [if they are] “Looking for a colleague to co-develop or co-teach a new course? Want to find a guest lecturer for your class? You’d like your students to gain insights from an expert from another country and/or discipline? Want to collaborate in creating innovative learning offers?”.

6. LET’S EXPLORE!: SHARING OF APPROACHES AND RESOURCES

Serving the purpose of sharing of resources for EPICUREan teaching & learning, in Let’s explore! members of the EPiC TLC may find information and tools concerning teaching and learning. Again, please see Annex 2 for screenshots of the EPiC TLC’s virtual space.

6.1. Discover EPICUREan Teaching and Learning

6.1.1. What is EPICUR?

Based on user-feedback, the section on EPICUR teaching and learning features an introductory video on the EPICUR Alliance and its purposes.

6.1.2. Why Teach in EPICUR?

Encouraging teaching staff to contribute to EPICUR’s teaching and learning offer, a video has been produced that briefly introduces the benefits of teaching in EPICUR. Rooted in research on perceived incentives for teachers (e.g., from quality assurance measures conducted in EPICUR’s pilot phase), the video features teaching staff addressing the audience of teaching staff across the Alliance.

6.1.3. Guide to Designing and Developing your EPICUR Course

In the context of another deliverable in EPICUR, a Best Practice Guide to designing (international) teaching and learning offers has been developed. It is featured in the EPiC TLC to provide accessible guidance and inspiration for teachers and educational developers interested in developing and /or teaching EPICUR courses and learning experiences. It focuses on those aspects of course design and delivery which are particularly associated with EPICUR Values in teaching and learning, namely to provide higher education that is inclusive, interactive, innovative, international, intercultural, and interdisciplinary.

6.1.4. How to Teach in EPICUR: Practical Information

A Question and Answer section on practical aspects of teaching in EPICUR is also provided in Let's Explore!. Collecting questions from teaching (support) staff across the Alliance involved with (piloting) EPICUR's joint educational offer, it provides answers to questions such as: When is the course catalogue published? How can students enrol for my course - and who will select the successful candidates? How do I share my course with the EPICURUS?, Teaching staff are invited to reach out to their institutional coordinators for any other questions and their names and email-addresses are provided.

6.2. Repository of Didactic and Pedagogic Resources

An overview of pedagogic/didactic resources is provided in a repository. Users have the option to filter the database to find information and resources relevant to their interest or needs. The repository includes descriptions and weblinks to resources such as tools, project outcomes, and research papers.

6.3. OER - Open Educational Resources

EPiC TLC users are invited to discover OER - free educational materials that can be used and edited with little or no restrictions - and use them for their teaching contexts. They are encouraged to share teaching and learning materials with other EPiCUR teachers. When accessing this subsection, EPiC TLC users are transferred to a page titled Let's share!. Here, OER are explained and benefits of sharing materials are delineated. Users are informed, "We are currently preparing this space so that in the near future you can access and contribute to an array of Open Education Resources. In the meantime, if you would like to be part of the discussion in EPiCUR, join our Special Interest Group 'Open Educational Resources & Practices OER/OEP' ". By the end of the EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT funding phase and in conjunction with a related task in WP3, Open Educational Practices will be promoted and facilitated on the VCLP and through activities in the EPiC TLC.

6.4. Funding Tips

Moreover, funding tips for teaching (development) within EPiCUR can be placed and found under Let's Explore!. Thus, information on financial support opportunities for international teaching and learning offers through projects and initiatives can be systematically placed, e.g., Blended Intensive Programmes promoted by International Offices of the EPiCUR partners. Thus, teaching staff may find additional ("independent") funding and be incentivised to implement their ideas for innovative teaching and learning offers.

7. LET'S GROW!: PROFESSIONALISATION PROGRAMME

Serving the purpose of providing professionalisation opportunities for EPiCUR teaching staff, in Let's grow! members of the EPiC TLC may find information on possibilities to develop their (international) teaching competence portfolio.

It is intended to create an offer that is informed by empirical research on teaching and learning as well as adapted to the EPiCUR context. While the development of the “EPiCUR International Teaching Competence Framework” as the basis for curating and creating a streamlined (international) teaching competence development programme for teaching staff across the EPiCUR Alliance is ongoing, training offers that have been indicated in the EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT Grant Agreement and/or clearly identified by the Task Team as fundamental training needs are being piloted.

7.1. Joint EPiCUR International Teaching Competence Framework

To inform the competence-oriented curriculum development process for the EPiC TLC's teaching competence development programme, the EPiC TLC team is carefully co-creating a competence framework for international teaching competences. This framework is rooted in sources representing multiple stakeholder perspectives concerning desirable/needed competences for teaching and learning in international contexts, namely:

- Collections of such competences from various workshops and meetings with stakeholders from within and beyond the EPiCUR Alliance (e.g., European University Alliances conference, EPiCUR Forum, and Work package and Task Team meetings and workshops dedicated to the subject).
- Indicators of the *Student-centred framework for teaching competence in higher education* ([Hempfling & Hüther-Pape, 2024](#)) developed based on student responses in the context of EPiCUR's pilot phase.

In a first step of the research-informed development process, all of the collected competences were clustered by teams of two Task Team members. Based on qualitative and quantitative analysis of results, the “EPICUR International Teaching Competence Framework” will be delineated.

7.2. (Pilot) Training Offers

Due to timing and task constraints, both a top-down approach (developing a framework to inform curriculum development) and a bottom-up approach (piloting and assessing initial trainings) are being followed simultaneously in creating the professionalisation programme. Thus, elements of the EPiC TLC’s future teaching professionalisation programme are “test-run” with the ultimately intended target audience in the international setting.

7.2.1. Teaching and Learning in Intercultural Contexts

To provide educators across the EPICUR Alliance with a relatively low-threshold training opportunity to develop their competences, the workshop “Teaching and Learning in Intercultural Contexts” was created.

This workshop was piloted in Freiburg in 2023 with an international group of educators from different disciplines. Based on evaluation results, the concept was adapted, critically reviewed by the Task Team and further adapted to best meet the reality of teaching staff in the EPICUR Alliance context.

The half-day, online workshop, is open to registration for all teaching staff across the EPICUR Alliance free of charge. A description has been prepared in accordance with a template delineating details of the offer, as shown in Table 2. The template is designed to reflect categories needed in order for the offer to be integrated into various local development programmes – and potentially be counted for local credit (e.g., towards University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences – BOKU’s staff training pass).

Table 2: Overview of the EPiC TLC training offer “Teaching and Learning in Intercultural Contexts”

Title of the training offer/workshop	Teaching and Learning in Intercultural Contexts
Target group	Teaching staff at all EPiCUR partner universities
Goals/Intended Training Outcomes	<p>After this workshop, you will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name examples of (culturally) diverse experiences of teaching and learning. • Explain the advantages of diversity for problem-solving (processes/results). • Reflect on the challenges and opportunities of intercultural teaching and learning situations. • Recognise and value individually different learning histories. • Consider phenomena from social and educational psychology relevant to intercultural interaction/ communication/collaboration in your teaching. • Use tools and approaches to harness diversity in your teaching.
Contents	<p>Identification of intercultural learning & teaching situations; Aspects of diversity, and related chances and challenges; Concepts, approaches and tools from social and educational psychology relevant to intercultural interaction/ collaboration/ communication; advantages of diversity to problem-solving from a scientific perspective.</p>
Mode of delivery	Online session (synchronous)
Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group-work • Individual reflection based on prompts • Trainer impulses <p>Discussion/experience sharing</p>
Contents in key words (max 300 characters, e.g., for BOKU’s training pass)	Intercultural learning and teaching; chances and challenges of diversity; social & educational psychology perspectives/tools; intercultural collaboration in and beyond the classroom.
Workload	4 hours
Times	September 30th, 2024, 9.00-13.00 CET
Working language	English
Number of participants	Minimum of 5, maximum of 18 (1-3 per EPiCUR partner)
Trainer	Dr. XXX: Psychologist with specialisations in educational psychology and interculturality. Scientific staff member and trainer at the department of Higher Education Didactics and Digital Learning and Teaching Development at the University of Freiburg. Experienced in university teaching, research, project coordination, teaching-, quality- and curricular development, as well as internationalisation.

7.2.2. International Teaching and Learning: Hybrid and Online Sessions

The future comprehensive training offer across EPICUR regarding aspects of digital teaching and learning is detailed in Table 3.

Table 3: Overview of the training offer "International Teaching and Learning: Hybrid and Online Sessions"

Title of the training offer/workshop	International Teaching and Learning: Hybrid and Online Sessions
Target group	Teaching staff at all EPICUR partner universities
Goals/Intended Training Outcomes	<p>After this workshop, you will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and explain fundamental concepts and strategies for effective synchronous hybrid and online teaching. • Apply best practices in planning and conducting synchronous hybrid and online sessions. • Analyse digital teaching tools and techniques to enhance student engagement during synchronous sessions. • Evaluate your synchronous teaching practices and identify areas for improvement. • Create practical plans to integrate effective synchronous hybrid and online teaching methods into your own courses.
Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronous Hybrid Teaching: Challenges, concepts, strategies • Synchronous Online Teaching: Best practices, tools, interaction methods, classroom management • Student Engagement: Techniques, maintaining interaction, participation strategies • Digital Tools: Platforms, software, interactive technologies, troubleshooting for synchronous sessions <p>Reflection and Improvement: Self-assessment, peer feedback, continuous development</p>
Mode of delivery	Blended/Flipped mode
Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asynchronous self-study of trainer impulses • Reflection / small group discussion in web meeting <p>Transfer and application tasks related to individual teaching projects</p>
Contents in key words (max 300 characters, e.g. for BOKU's training pass)	<p>Synchronous Hybrid and Online Teaching: Concepts, strategies, challenges, best practices, tools, interaction methods, classroom management</p> <p>Student Engagement: Techniques, maintaining interaction, participation strategies</p> <p>Digital Tools: Systems, interactive technologies, troubleshooting</p>
Workload	6 hours

Times	2 hours of asynchronous study: x Apr – x May 2025 2-hour web meeting: xx May 2025, 10-12 CET 2 hours for completion of transfer tasks: by 11 July 2025
Working language	English
Number of participants	Min. no. of 5, max. no. of 15
Trainers	Digital education specialist. Scientific staff member, educational developer and trainer at the E-Learning department at the University of Freiburg. Experienced in university teaching, train-the-trainer workshops, online, blended/flipped settings, project coordination, as well as internationalisation. Enjoys working in the context of teaching (competence) development in the EPiCUR European University Alliance as well as in the edacticLab of the University of Freiburg.

8. COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Effective communication and public relations are pivotal to the success and visibility of the EPiC TLC. This chapter outlines the strategies, tools, and activities employed to ensure robust communication and representation of the EPiC TLC within the EPiCUR Alliance and beyond.

8.1. Communication and Public Relations Strategies

The EPiC TLC's communication strategy is designed to promote transparency, engagement, and alignment with the broader EPiCUR Alliance goals. The strategy includes regular updates, stakeholder engagement, and proactive public relations to ensure visibility and support. By leveraging various tools, collaborating with key partners, and engaging stakeholders through consistent and strategic communication efforts, the EPiC TLC ensures its activities are well represented, its mission is widely understood and supported and thus its offers and services well used and further developed with the Community of Practice.

It is crucial that the EPiC TLC lead collaborates with the EPICUR Communications Office through regular updates and coordination meetings to discuss and align communication strategies, ensure consistency in messaging, and plan joint activities and events. An example of such communication is the interview with the EPiC TLC Task Team leads, which provides insights into the EPiC TLC's mission and activities. This interview was featured on the EPICUR website and showcases the Centre's impact and future plans: [Interview on EPICUR website](#).

For pragmatic reasons, coordination with the Communications Office is usually carried out via the local EPICUR Communications Officer at the University of Freiburg.

At the same time, frequent communication with the Task Team members as well as with the Alliance Coordination Group (ACG) ensures alignment and consistency in in-house communication (e.g., via staff newsletters) institutions. Feedback mechanisms are in place to collect and address stakeholder feedback, allowing for continuous improvement in communication efforts.

8.2. Communication Tools

Since the opening event of the EPiC TLC on February 23, 2024, a series of coordinated communication tools have been gradually developed and introduced, e.g., a joint toolkit for Alliance-wide flexible stakeholder communication and the monthly EPiC TLC Newsletter, first published in July 2024.

The toolkit "(How) to tell your colleagues about the EPiC TLC", accessible on MS Teams, includes standardised templates for presentations, key messages, descriptions of event formats, and talking points for various stakeholders in various formats (text, videos) and visual identity guidelines to maintain brand consistency (e.g., logo). The toolkit is used by EPiC TLC Task Team members and institutional representatives to provide Alliance-wide consistency and

flexibility in stakeholder communication, ensuring that messages are aligned with the EPiC TLC's branding and goals.

An EPiC TLC flyer developed by the Task Lead with feedback from the Task Team serves as a comprehensive introduction to the EPiC TLC, highlighting its mission, objectives, and key activities. It includes an overview of the EPiC TLC's mission and goals, its key areas and activities as well as contact information, the link to the virtual platform and ways to get involved. The flyer is distributed at Alliance-wide EPICUR events and locally at partner institutions.

The EPiC TLC Newsletter (see August 2024 edition in Annex 3) serves as a key internal communication tool to update members and other stakeholders on the EPiC TLC's activities, achievements, and upcoming events. It is distributed monthly via the virtual platform messaging system, exclusively to the members of the EPiC TLC. Apart from recurring information on the EPiC TLC as a cross-Alliance service, the Newsletter focuses on specific features of the virtual platform, announces upcoming events and trainings and highlights Special Interest Groups as well as opportunities for teaching collaborations.

8.3. Public Relations Activities

The EPiC TLC is actively represented in meetings of the Alliance Coordination Group, that is, the group headed by EPICUR's strategic coordinator comprising the Alliance manager, institutional coordinators from all EPICUR partners, central service/unit coordinators and policy group leaders, as well as the European Institutions Liaison Officer. Thus, alignment of EPiC TLC offers with current developments within the EPICUR Alliance is fostered.

The EPiC TLC's participation in various EPICUR-wide events and internal meetings is essential for promoting its initiatives and engaging stakeholders. Examples of such events include the EPICUR Kick-Off & Forum with presentations and workshops highlighting the EPiC TLC's offers, achievements and mission, internal meetings with institutional coordinators, International Office's mobility days, Study Deans' round. Upon special request, presentations

are prepared by the Task lead and given by institutional coordinators or, in some cases, by the vice-rector for internationalisation to key university bodies.

9. EVALUATION

9.1. Analysis of Key Performance Indicators

The EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) has been designed to align with the broader project goals and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the EPiCUR Alliance⁴.

While the EPiC TLC's contributions are already visible, it is important to note that due to the limited time the EPiC TLC has been operational, a complete evaluation cannot yet be conducted. A thorough evaluation is planned for March 2025, once the Centre has been running for a full year. The results of this evaluation will be presented to the EPiCUR ECOM (Education Committee), and based on their recommendations, a report could be submitted to the EPiCUR Management Board (MB) for further review and feedback. This evaluation process will be crucial for assessing the impact of the EPiC TLC on meeting both its internal KPIs and its alignment with EPiCUR's strategic objectives and the European Commission's Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP) 2021-2027 objectives.

As the Centre continues to develop, it will play a key role in achieving broader project KPIs, particularly in areas related to digitalisation, cross-institutional collaboration, and professionalisation of teaching practices. This future evaluation will provide valuable insights into the Centre's performance and inform any necessary adjustments to its offerings and services to maximise its contribution to the EPiCUR Alliance's strategic goals.

⁴ Cf. EPiCUR Alliance (2022). EPiCUR Shaping Higher Education in Transition (EPiCUR--SHAPE-IT). Project proposal in Erasmus+ Programme (ERASMUS) Application Form ERASMUS-EDU-2022- EUR-UNIV] — Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities.

9.1.1. Teaching Staff Engagement (EPiC TLC KPI)

The EPiC TLC directly supports the engagement of teaching staff through professional development, community-building, and resource sharing. The number of members in the Community of Practice (CoP) and the number of services and tools provided by the EPiC TLC are essential KPIs that directly impact the broader project objectives. For example, increasing engagement in the CoP and the availability of teaching support tools foster greater participation in EPICUR’s multilateral educational offers.

As of October 1, 2024, 7 months after its opening, the EPiC TLC comprises 380 members from across the EPICUR Alliance. This indicates both interest by the target group as well as successful implementation as intended in the EPICUR-SHAPE-IT Grant Agreement. It specifies in the Evaluation Plan, among target values for “Teaching staff support in EPICUR mobilities” that one EPiC TLC and one CoP shall have been developed. While continuous development is being pursued, these indicators have already been met. Moreover, more than 73% of the targeted number of members in the CoP has already been reached (>450). Hence, there is confidence that the objectives will be met by the end of EPICUR-SHAPE-IT.

The EPiC TLC is used by teachers from all nine partner universities, yet with an unequal membership distribution among the individual universities (see Table 4) which may be partly due to the differences in the sizes of the respective universities.

Table 4: Membership distribution among EPICUR universities

University	no. of members	in percent
Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU)	33	9 %
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH)	81	21 %
University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU)	20	5,5 %
Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT)	60	16 %
University of Southern Denmark (SDU)	19	5 %
University of Freiburg (UFR)	88	23 %
University of Upper-Alsace (UHA)	24	6,5 %
University of Strasbourg (UNISTRA)	29	8 %

University of Amsterdam (UvA)	17	4.5 %
External (guest accounts)	7	1,5 %
Total	380	100 %

9.1.2. Development of Shared/Joint Services (EPiC TLC KPI)

The EPiC TLC is a key component of EPICUR’s joint services, along with other initiatives such as the EPICURUS digital campus, Course Management Office, Mobility Office, and the Open Educational Resources (OER) service. The establishment and expansion of shared services in conjunction with the EPiC TLC directly contribute to the project’s target of increasing the number of shared/joint services, a crucial KPI under EPICUR’s objective of promoting collaboration and resource-sharing across the Alliance. The creation of these services supports seamless teaching cooperation, aligning with the overall goal of strengthening inter- institutional networks.

9.1.3. Digitalisation of EPICUR Services (EPiC TLC KPI)

The digital transformation of teaching and learning processes through the EPiC TLC is vital for the overall project success. The KPI related to the number of digitalised services created under EPICUR can be substantially improved by the EPiC TLC’s efforts to offer digital platforms for collaboration, access to OER, and professional development. These digitalised services are integral to achieving EPICUR’s broader goals, such as creating a fully interoperable virtual campus connecting local LMS (and CMS) systems across the partner institutions not only for students but also for professional staff and lifelong learners.

9.1.4. Hybrid Classrooms Network (Project KPI)

The development and deployment of Hybrid Classrooms is a key initiative within the EPICUR-SHAPE-IT project, aimed at creating flexible, technology-enhanced learning environments across the Alliance. The EPiC TLC plays a crucial role in supporting this initiative by providing the necessary resources and

training to educators. As part of its professionalisation programme (currently in development) the EPiC TLC will offer teacher training specifically targeted at utilising hybrid classroom technologies effectively. This includes delivering workshops and developing supporting documents that guide educators through best practices for hybrid teaching, addressing challenges such as maintaining student engagement, managing both in- person and remote learners, and optimising the use of digital tools.

Through these training offers and resources, the EPiC TLC contributes directly to the project KPI of establishing a Hybrid Classrooms network across EPICUR member universities. The success of this network depends not only on the technological infrastructure but also on the ability of teaching staff to competently deliver high-quality educational experiences in hybrid settings. The EPiC TLC's focus on professional development ensures that educators are equipped to make the most of Hybrid Classrooms, thereby fostering the broader objective of enhancing digital transformation and promoting mobility through blended and online teaching formats

9.1.5. Joint Learning Units or Modules (Project KPI)

By empowering teaching staff through the CoP and digital tools, the EPiC TLC supports the creation and delivery of joint learning units or modules across the Alliance. This KPI is crucial to EPICUR's aim of deepening and broadening its educational offerings. The EPiC TLC's role in fostering collaborative teaching and the use of innovative pedagogical tools directly contributes to the goal of creating >100 joint/shared EPICUR learning units.

9.1.6. Participation in Professional Development and Lifelong Learning (Project KPI)

The EPiC TLC is pivotal in facilitating professional development opportunities for educators engaged in international teaching and learning which enhances participation in lifelong learning formats. Increasing the number of staff

engaging in EPICUR mobility formats and professional development through EPiC TLC programmes directly supports the project's target of achieving 900 staff participants in EPICUR mobility formats. These activities may also contribute to the KPI for lifelong learners engaging in EPICUR formats, particularly given the collaboration with WP5 Building skills with society and their task to develop a Lifelong Learning platform.

9.2. Energy for Synergies! Co-creation for Acceptance, Collaboration and Integration

Aside from the added value outlined in Chapter 3.2, positive effects were observed throughout the process of conceptualising, establishing, and introducing the EPiC TLC to its target groups, as well as during (quality assessment measures of) its pilot offers. Most importantly, it has been observed that co-creative approaches and continuous communication involving stakeholders at all partner universities are crucial for the acceptance of offers. Integrating feedback from users as well as the local teaching support experts across the Alliance does not only foster integration of offers from across the Alliance into the partner universities. Sharing and considering various perspectives contributes to the development of high quality offerings that may genuinely meet the needs of the target groups.

9.3. Sustainability

The major challenge encountered in establishing the EPiC TLC and its offers is the yet unresolved question of sustainability (compare also Section 3.6 Challenges Encountered: Obstacles and Opportunities). The possible long-term integration into local programmes and related acceptance and uptake at the partner universities of EPICUR's first central service unit and its developed offers are considerably challenged by the project character of EPICUR-SHAPE-IT. Expected limited resources in terms of finances beyond the funding phase,

specifically with respect to human resources (in many places too scarce as is), thus impedes initiatives regarding sustainable operation of offers.

Inter alia, through thorough quality assurance development measures for the offers and by sharing insights and experiences gained, it is hoped that a foundation can be provided to inform concepts for the sustainable operation of what has been built by the cross-Alliance team.

9.4. Continuous Development

At the opening event of the EpiC TLC, as well as during workshops, it is constantly emphasised: This joint Centre is not a finished or finite project. Rather, it is an ever-evolving resource for and by EPICUR's Community of Practice.

An observation made throughout the process of conceptualising, establishing, and introducing the EpiC TLC to stakeholders and target groups, as well as during (quality assessment measures of) its pilot offers has been: Co-creative approaches and continuous communication that includes stakeholders at all partner universities is crucial to the acceptance of offers. Integrating feedback from users as well as the local teaching support experts across the Alliance does not only foster integration of offers from across the Alliance and into the partner universities. Sharing and taking into account the various perspectives also foster the development of high quality offers that may truly serve the intended target groups.

The approaches taken will gladly be recommended, e.g., with respect to the flipped meeting concept and the respective co-creation phases. This approach has proven to be efficient, as it allows for true collaboration and integration of perspectives while keeping the need for virtual co-presence meetings minimal. Based on experiences, the co-creative and user-oriented approaches are highly recommended. To gather perspectives beyond the Alliance-wide Task Team, responses and reactions were collected from various stakeholders throughout the conception and creation of the EpiC TLC to ensure usability. Such formative

evaluation measures will continue to be used to ensure ongoing quality development and usability of the EPiC TLC's virtual space, its activities and training offers.

For the remainder of EPICUR-SHAPE-IT, it is intended to complete several major tasks. While some of them have been explicated in the Grant Agreement, others have emerged from the work with the Task Team and other stakeholders across and beyond the Alliance.

9.4.1. Management of Ongoing Tasks

Now that the EPiC TLC and initial offers and trainings as well as the EPiC TLC's Community Event programme have been developed, the individual offers have to be organised, planned, advertised, implemented and evaluated. Communication such as the monthly EPiC TLC Newsletter (see Annex 3) have to be prepared and shared with the Community of Practice. Developments have to be shared with the wider EPICUR community as well as collaboration continued with related tasks in EPICUR-SHAPE-IT. To manage these tasks and to continuously develop resources in the EPiC TLC, also with respect to the intended developments delineated in the remainder of this chapter, meetings with the EPiC TLC Team (4.3 Task Team) will continue to be held on a bi-monthly basis and with other stakeholders representing related tasks in EPICUR.

9.4.2. Further Training Development, Joint Framework, and Professionalisation Offers

While the benchmarks defined in the Grant Agreement concerning "Trainings for EPICUR teaching staff" (Task 4.3.3) may already be reached with the training offers and other activities described above, synchronous as well as (partially) asynchronous training offers to be included in the EPiC TLC will continue to be developed. The development shall be informed by and aligned with, e.g., the ongoing joint elaboration of the EPICUR International Teaching Competence Framework (compare Section 7.1). With respect to incentives, certification

opportunities within the realm of the Alliance will be further explored and proposed. Accordingly, the EPiC TLC's area Let's Grow! will be further developed.

9.4.3. Quality Assurance of Offers for Quality Development

Rooted in the Task Lead's understanding of and commitments to quality assurance as a means for continuous quality development, it is intended to develop and implement suitable evaluation formats and processes for the various offers and activities in the EPiC TLC. Collected data will be analysed and offers will continue to be developed in accordance with the results. Quality development will be related both to EPiCUR internal frameworks, including the EPiCUR International Teaching Competence Framework (see Section 7.1) and overarching frameworks such as the [European Framework for the Comprehensive Quality Assurance of European Universities](#) (EUniQ, n.d.).

9.4.4. Advancement of Open Educational Resources

By the end of the EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT funding phase and in conjunction with a related task in WP3, Open Educational Practices will be promoted and facilitated on the VCLP and through activities in the EPiC TLC. To reach this, inter alia, collaboration in the respective Special Interest Group facilitated on the EPiC TLC will be continued and the respective virtual space in the EPiC TLC's area Let's Explore! will be further developed.

9.4.5. Exploration of Sustainability Options

It is intended to collect and explore ideas regarding options for sustainable implementation of the offers and activities established in the context of the EPiC TLC beyond the EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT funding phase. It is intended to propose the thus identified ideas to the relevant bodies in EPiCUR and the partner universities, respectively.

Inter alia, via thorough quality assurance development measures regarding the offers, and by sharing insights and experiences gained, it is hoped that a foundation can be provided to inform concepts for sustainable operation of what has been built in the cross-Alliance team. Accordingly, the EPiC TLC's ToR state that "A concept for sustainable operation of the EPiCUR TLC beyond EU funding of EPiCUR-SHAPE IT shall be subsequently developed by the Alliance based on recommendations provided by the 4.3 Task Team" (p. 9).

9.4.6. Fine-tuning of Communication Concept

Means of communication with the Community of Practice have already been implemented, e.g., via the EPiC TLC's virtual space. The communication concept is planned to be fine-tuned and further developed in collaboration with relevant stakeholders as well as services across the Alliance, such as the EPiCUR Communications Office.

10. CONCLUSION: STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF THE EPiC TLC

Strategic Importance and Digital Transformation

The establishment of the EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) marks a major step forward in achieving EPiCUR's goal of transforming higher education within the Alliance. The Centre has successfully created a joint service unit for teaching staff and support staff, underpinned by collaboration and co-creation across the Alliance's institutions. From the early development of its Terms of Reference (ToR) to the launch of its virtual space, the EPiC TLC has been designed to support international, intercultural, interdisciplinary, innovative, interactive and innovative educational practices.

Importantly, the EPiC TLC directly contributes to the European Commission's Digital Education Action Plan (2021–2027). By fostering the digital competence of educators, aiming to provide high-quality educational contents, and supporting innovative teaching formats like Hybrid Classrooms, the EPiC TLC aligns with DEAP's strategic priority to reset education and training for the digital age. The Centre's virtual space and professional development programmes equip educators with the skills and tools they need to navigate the evolving digital education landscape, responding to the increasing demand for digitally confident educators and competence-oriented, digitally enhanced learning experiences.

The EPiC TLC also advances EPICUR's digital transformation goals, which are central to DEAP's vision for a high-performing digital education ecosystem. Through the provision of Open Educational Resources (OER) and the support of Hybrid Classrooms deployment, the EPiC TLC contributes to building robust, secure, and inclusive digital infrastructures across the EPICUR Alliance. These efforts help ensure that EPICUR's educational offerings are not only innovative but also digitally resilient and scalable, addressing DEAP's call for cooperative and collaborative digital learning environments.

Achievements and Collaborative Processes

The EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) represents a significant achievement in the Alliance's goal to create a joint service unit for teaching and teaching support staff across the EPICUR network. Through the dedication of a motivated Task Team and the implementation of effective collaboration structures, the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the EPiC TLC were successfully co-created within the first few months. These ToR outline the Centre's purpose, structures, and procedures, as well as its core services and offerings. The Task Team also co-creatively developed a name and logo for the Centre, ensuring clear and unified cross-institutional branding.

Employing user-oriented approaches, the EPiC TLC's virtual space was designed in accordance with the purposes and principles outlined in the ToR. Through its three dedicated areas *Let's connect!*, *Let's explore!* and *Let's grow!*, the Centre facilitates collaboration within the Community of Practice, supports quality

development in teaching and learning, promotes the exchange of resources across the Alliance, and enables professional development for teaching (support) staff.

In addition to tangible outcomes, the co-creation of the EPiC TLC has generated synergetic effects: The joint efforts facilitate efficient forms of collaboration as well as quality development in cross-national teaching and learning. The joint Centre's offerings and services provide added value, complementing each of the nine involved universities' teaching support structures. Moreover, by providing opportunities for professional development and resource-sharing, the Centre strengthens the identification of teachers and educational support staff with EPICUR's Values, pedagogical principles, and European learning experiences.

Evaluation and Future Development

The alignment of the EPiC TLC with DEAP's priorities ensures that its contributions extend beyond EPICUR, supporting Europe-wide efforts to strengthen digital education systems. The Centre's ongoing development will focus on further enhancing its virtual space and expanding access to OER, along with offering tailored training programmes that, inter alia, foster digital literacy and competence among teaching staff. Moreover, the EPiC TLC will continue to play a crucial role in achieving EPICUR's project-wide Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), especially in promoting digitalisation, cross-institutional collaboration, and hybrid teaching environments. A comprehensive evaluation is planned for March 2025, after the Centre has been running for a full year.

As part of its future development, the EPiC TLC will also explore sustainable models for long-term operation beyond the funding period of EPICUR-SHAPE IT. These recommendations will be co-created with Alliance partners and presented to the relevant decision-making bodies, ensuring that the Centre's services and impact can continue to benefit EPICUR members and potentially extend to other educational institutions.

Broader Impact and Sharing of Best Practices

The EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) represents a model of best practice in the European University Alliance landscape. As part of a growing network of alliances that includes initiatives like the ECIU's University Teacher Hub and Enlight's Teaching and Learning Hub, the EPiC TLC is a leading example of how cross-institutional collaboration, digital innovation, and internationalisation can enhance higher education. By focusing on digital literacy, hybrid learning environments, and the professional development of educators, the EPiC TLC not only supports the objectives of EPiCUR but also contributes to the wider goals of the European Union's Digital Education Action Plan (DEAP). Experiences and lessons learnt in conceptualising and establishing a joint Teaching and Learning Centre in the context of a European University Alliance may offer valuable insights for other European University alliances and international educational initiatives aiming to create central teaching and learning services. By aligning with the DEAP, the Centre may serve as a blueprint for institutions aiming to implement central teaching and learning services that support the digital transformation of education. Moving forward, EPiCUR plans to share these experiences and practices with broader audiences, e.g., through presentations at relevant conferences and collaborations with stakeholders across Europe. This ongoing co-creative process highlights the value of collaboration and community building in the establishment of centralised teaching and learning services within the context of a European University Alliance.

In summary, the EPiC TLC stands as a strategic asset within EPiCUR, promoting not only the Alliance's educational goals but also contributing significantly to the broader European objectives outlined in the Digital Education Action Plan. Through its alignment with similar projects across European alliances, the EPiC TLC demonstrates how EPiCUR is contributing to the broader digital transformation of European education, setting a benchmark for other institutions striving to enhance international teaching and learning practices. Its co-creative establishment and ongoing efforts towards digital transformation will continue to drive innovation in teaching and learning, both within EPiCUR and beyond.

11. RESOURCES

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12. ANNEXES

12.1. Annex 1: Updated Terms of Reference for the EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (2024)

EPICUR-SHAPE-IT

Joint EPICUR Teaching and Learning Centre

Terms of Reference

12.1.1. Background and context: A Central Service Unit for EPiCUR

As per the EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT⁵ proposal, Task 4.3.1 comprises “Provide concept and Terms of Reference for the EPiCUR Joint Teaching and Learning Centre as well as specification of its main offers and services. This activity concerns the design of the EPiCUR TLC policies as an online service with representatives from local EPiCUR TLCs.”

In the following, the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the EPiCUR *Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC)*⁶ are delineated. These ToR have been co-created by the cross-Alliance 4.3 Task Team comprising representatives from all EPiCUR partners and EPiCUR student representatives. Integrating aims, ideas, and suggestions gathered from the EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT proposal, a workshop at the EPiCUR kick-off in Strasbourg (February 8-10, 2023) as well as the first 4.3 Task Team meeting (March 8, 2023), a first draft of these ToR was prepared. Based on feedback by the 4.3 Task Team, amendments to the first draft were proposed and decided in the next Task Team meeting (April 14, 2023). Via the representatives in the Task Team, the second draft of the ToR was subsequently shared with heads of the teaching support units for comments and questioning. Based on respective feedback, the ToR were again revised and augmented based on decisions taken in the next Task Team meeting (May 16, 2023). The ToR presented in the following are thus the result of a co-creative process including representatives from all EPiCUR Alliance partners.

The EPiCUR Alliance has the ambition to “transform education, research and transfer practices and opportunities across its member universities in order to develop original cutting-edge solutions and train new generations of European change makers” (EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT proposal, updated mission statement, 2022). Consequently, EPiCUR teaching staff faces new challenges in international and intercultural teaching and learning. In its pilot phase (2019-2022), EPiCUR found that teaching staff would benefit from a networked

⁵ For the second ERASMUS+ funding phase (2022-2026), the project acronym EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT represents “EPiCUR Shaping Higher Education in Transition.

⁶ **Revision August 2024:** Pursuant to an iterative name-finding procedure, the 4.3 Task Team has officially adopted the term “EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning” and the abbreviation “EPiC TLC” to refer to the joint centre. Consequently, all instances of the term “EPiCUR Joint Teaching and Learning Centre” in this document have been amended accordingly.

teaching and learning community for guidance and support regarding these novel ways of teaching.

The EPiC TLC aims to promote purposeful development in teaching and learning. Sharing experiences and resources of local teaching support units, it shall create synergistic, Alliance-wide support structures for teaching (development) staff involved with EPICUR learning offers. The EPiC TLC shall be a focal point for international and intercultural teaching supporting academics in adopting innovative teaching practices consistent with the Alliance's values and goals. Based on the commitment of the EPICUR partner universities to work together towards the common goal of enhancing teaching and learning quality, the EPiC TLC is designed to be an online network with representatives from all partners, including local teaching support units. Its offers and services must be sufficiently flexible and adaptable to reflect dynamic developments in higher education didactics and technology as well as quality management requirements and systems.

12.1.2. Specification of offers and activities of the EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC)

12.1.2.1. Objectives and target groups of the EPiC TLC

12.1.2.1.1. Objectives

The purpose of the EPICUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning (EPiC TLC) is to foster inclusive development of teaching (and thus of learning) in EPICUR by establishing synergetic cross-Alliance support structures for teaching staff.

The EPiC TLC aims to provide a single (online) point of reference for teaching (development/support) staff from the EPICUR partner universities concerning international and intercultural teaching in partnership with students. The EPiC TLC offers support for the development and implementation of pedagogical competences and practices that align with EPICUR's values, principles and aims for inclusive and intercultural higher education. Thus, taking into account the multitude of practices, structures, and experiences regarding learning and

teaching offers at the different EPiCUR partners, harmonisation of EPiCUR teaching and learning offers shall be supported. The EPiCUR partner universities have the opportunity to both contribute to and benefit from the EPiC TLC.

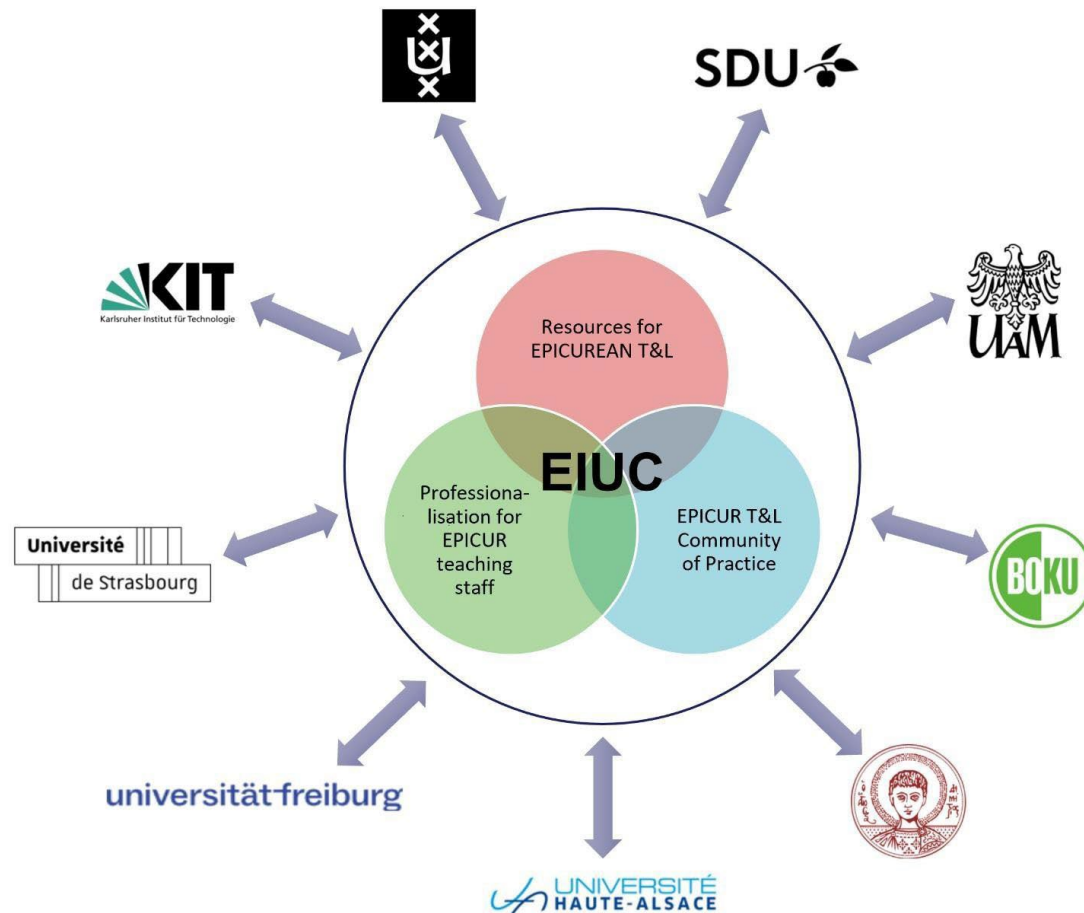


Figure 8: The EPiC TLC as an Alliance-wide service structure

12.1.2.1.2. Target groups

The EPiC TLC is to provide support, materials and opportunity for exchange for individuals involved with providing teaching. The EPiC TLC will primarily provide offers for teaching staff as well as teaching support staff involved in EPiCUR teaching and learning activities. For EPiC TLC purposes, “EPiCUR teaching staff” refers to everyone engaged with teaching at one of the EPiCUR partner universities. That includes, but is not limited to, full professors, assistant professors, lecturers, scientific staff with teaching responsibilities, and

students when they are serving a tutoring or teaching role. The EPiC TLC may also be a source of information and inspiration for anyone interested in (further developing) teaching and learning practices in higher education. In the EPiC TLC's virtual community of practice, special interest groups for and with students can be provided, to allow for exchange and good practice sharing.

Other administrative staff involved with teaching organisation (student data administrators etc.) may also benefit from specific resources such as MOOCs, e.g., developed in Task 3.8 *Supporting digital skills and competences for EPiCUREans* which shall be accessible via the EPiC TLC.

12.1.2.2. *Offers and activities*

To promote inclusive development in teaching (and thus in learning) in EPiCUR, synergetic cross-Alliance support structures for teaching staff shall be established. The EPiC TLC shall provide opportunities to empower teaching staff across the Alliance to advance their teaching to be international, intercultural, interdisciplinary, innovative, inclusive, and interactive⁷ and aligned with EPiCUR educational principles. Thus, the EPiC TLC shall offer a platform for teaching staff and teaching support staff to learn from each other and with one another, to share good practices and resources, and to collaborate on projects to promote EPiCUREan teaching and learning practices across EPiCUR universities. The EPiC TLC shall promote established EPiCUREan teaching and learning practices (e.g., cross-cultural teaching and learning, digital/blended/flipped teaching and learning formats, teaching and learning for sustainable transformation, inter- and transdisciplinary teaching, research-based teaching and learning, challenge/problem-based learning and teaching).

To ensure access, the EPiC TLC shall be designed so that teaching (support) staff at the EPiCUR universities have easy access to its resources and services,

⁷ Revision August 2024: The 4.3 Task Team has voted to include the term "interactive" in the list of educational principles/values. Consequently, the phrase "Resources shall be curated to align with the EPiCUR TLC's objective to empower teaching staff across the Alliance to advance their teaching to be international, intercultural, interdisciplinary, innovative, and inclusive" has been revised to "international, intercultural, interdisciplinary, innovative, inclusive, and inter- active" throughout this document.

adapting to the different needs and levels of experience of teaching (support) staff at different universities. This entails the establishment of a user-friendly virtual space on the EPiCUR Inter-University Campus (EIUC⁸) with adequate communication and collaboration tools and opportunities for content sharing, as well as training programmes and support for teaching (support) staff. To meet these objectives, in accordance with the overarching aims outlined above, the following offers and activities shall be developed for (and with) the target groups.

12.1.2.2.1. Establishing an EPiCUR Teaching and Learning Community of Practice

The EPiC TLC shall connect local teaching support staff, teaching staff and other stakeholders engaged in EPiCURean teaching and learning across EPiCUR universities.

In this EPiCUR Teaching and Learning Community of Practice, they can network and share knowledge, materials, experiences and participate in training offers related to international, intercultural, interdisciplinary, innovative, inclusive, and/or interactive teaching and learning formats.

Within this Community of Practice, collaborative teaching practice may be promoted. Moreover, it may foster the exchange of teaching (support) staff as well as peer support between universities. To enhance innovation in EPiCURean teaching and learning, the EPiC TLC shall involve students who have had and will have EPiCURean study experiences in its activities, providing opportunities for students to learn, collaborate, and share their ideas with teaching (support) staff and other stakeholders.

Complementing the work of the local teaching support units, the culture of continuous improvement may thus be advanced in teaching (support)

⁸ Once the platform has been further developed into EPiCURUS, respective wording in these Terms of Reference shall be adapted.

development across EPICUR. A sense of community across EPICUR shall be fostered, and involvement in EPICUREan teaching and learning activities further motivated across all partners.

To this end, the EPiC TLC shall be implemented as virtual space for sharing innovations and good practices related to teaching and learning. Its hall provides low threshold ways to search for, contact and collaborate with community members bilaterally or in Special Interest Groups, e.g., via social/expertise and learning/teaching maps. As a virtual network of local teaching support units, the EPiC TLC shall organise regular workshops, meetings, and events (online and offline) to bring together institutional partners and local teaching support units. These events can provide a platform for sharing knowledge, experiences, and good practices related to teaching and learning, and can help to build a sense of community among teaching (support) staff across the EPICUR Alliance.

12.1.2.2.2. *Sharing Resources for EPICUREan Teaching and Learning*

To foster innovation, the spread of good practices, and harmonisation of teaching (development) offers across the EPICUR Alliance, the sharing of and targeted search for resources shall be enabled via the EPiC TLC. Resources shall be curated to align with the EPiC TLC's objective to empower teaching staff across the Alliance to advance their teaching to be international, intercultural, interdisciplinary, innovative, inclusive, and interactive. In accordance with EPICUR's goal to promote Open Educational Resources (OER), the EPiC TLC shall support the development, sharing and use of OER⁹. This shall further enhance the provision of access to high-quality educational materials across the Alliance, fostering inclusive development in EPICUR teaching and learning.

⁹"EPICUR-SHAPE-IT will set-up a platform for sharing Open Educational Resources. Its task T3.6 will be dedicated to providing the technological means for sharing content and resources from within the VCLP as OER by using the Creative Commons licensing scheme. Shareable content will be disseminated and made available through OER harvesting methods and APIs in order to make it widely available and highly visible. The specific terms of reference of the EPICUR OER will be decided in the T3.1 by the Digital Strategy Unit." (EPICUR SHAPE IT proposal, 2022, p.55).

To this end, the EPiC TLC shall be implemented as an online platform allowing for the sharing of innovations and good practices related to teaching and learning. The EPiC TLC shall provide online access to curated resources, which may be previously locally developed or newly created in the context of EPICUR-SHAPE-IT. They may comprise, for instance, self-learning modules for blended educational staff development formats, FAQ pages that answer common questions about EPICUREan teaching and learning practices and the EIUC platform, and/or short videos by teaching staff and students who exemplify EPICUREan aims in their teaching and learning experiences. Moreover, OER repositories may be promoted and training offers on how to create and use OER embedded.

12.1.2.2.3. Providing Professionalisation Opportunities for EPICUR teaching staff

The EPiC TLC shall provide high-quality training and support in order to enhance the pedagogical competences of teaching staff, with a focus on developing competences needed by teaching staff to provide teaching in international and intercultural teaching and learning settings, aligned with EPICUR educational principles. Providing optional qualification and certification of teaching competence development for teaching staff, the EPiC TLC shall develop and offer formats that recognise and reward – and thus incentivise – competence development in EPICUREan teaching and learning. Participating in these offers, teaching staff across the Alliance will have the opportunity to collaborate and share ideas, further establishing the purpose-driven Community of Practice.

The EPiC TLC shall also equip local teaching support staff across the Alliance with necessary skills, procedures and materials to locally support teaching staff in (the development of) international, intercultural, interdisciplinary, innovative, inclusive, and interactive teaching practices. Thus, they can locally contribute to creating a supportive environment for EPICUR teaching staff.

The EPiC TLC shall also promote the “Scholarship of Teaching and Learning” (cf, e.g., Felten, 2023)¹⁰ as well as the sharing of educational research, facilitating collaboration between universities and contributing to the advancement of innovative learning and teaching practices rooted in empirical evidence.

Fostering the goals of cross-Alliance mobility and digitalisation for teaching staff and teaching support staff (and – ultimately – students) (cf. EPICUR-SHAPE IT WP2 and WP3), the EPiC TLC shall provide teaching staff with opportunities to develop necessary skills and knowledge to purposefully integrate digital technologies to foster learning in digital, blended and hybrid formats.

To this end, the EPiC TLC shall offer optional trainings for professional development of teaching competences for teaching staff. Specifically, competences needed for offering international, intercultural, interdisciplinary, innovative, inclusive, and interactive teaching shall be addressed.

A variety of synchronous and asynchronous offers (e.g., interactive online, blended courses, modules, workshops, summer schools, webinars, and events) shall provide opportunities for teaching staff to develop their pedagogical skills and knowledge in international and intercultural teaching and in hybrid/blended/online teaching and learning. The EPiC TLC shall coordinate the purposeful curation of existing offers at local teaching support units that can be made available for EPICUR staff across the Alliance. In the context of Task 4.3.3, the EPiC TLC will also develop new offers with a focus on teaching and learning in EPICUR.

In addition to training offers, innovative and proven competence development formats (e.g., exchange of good-practice via learning in communities, “maker space”, peer advising, job shadowing, mentoring programmes, hybrid teach-the-teacher programmes, self-directed learning, workshops in blended formats, etc.) may be developed, implemented, and evaluated. Certification for participation in development offers shall be developed and issued via the EPiC

¹⁰ Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) refers to the systematic investigation of student learning and the publishing of respective findings to advance teaching practice in higher education.

TLC. In this context, it may be explored which form(s) of certification may be used to provide teaching staff with formal recognition for their competence development in teaching and learning.

Qualifications resulting from development offers may be awarded with stackable micro-credentials in the form of badges and certificates and can provide teaching staff with formal recognition for their competence development in teaching and learning.

Activities in the Community of Practice may also be recognised to further incentivise continuous professional development and lifelong learning. Complementarily, teaching support units of all EPiCUR partners may choose to include offers from the EPiC TLC into their locally established certification programmes as they deem purposeful. Accordingly, the EPiC TLC shall provide training and support materials for teaching support staff at the different partner universities.

To promote the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, educational research involving teaching staff shall be encouraged in the EPiC TLC's Community of Practice. The sharing of teaching and learning publications, research conferences and workshops shall be enabled on the virtual platform, and collaboration between universities facilitated, contributing to the advancement of educational practices rooted in empirical evidence.

12.1.3. Alliance-wide service structure

12.1.3.1. *Concept of an Alliance-wide service structure*

The EPiC TLC will be established as a central organisational unit or service within the Alliance. As thus, it shall be aligned with other central units or services, in particular the Lifelong Learning Centre (led by SDU within Task 5.1), the Quality Assurance Unit (prepared by UNISTRA within Task 1.5) and the EIUC help desk (prepared by AUTH within Task 3.1).

The EPiC TLC functions as an online service connecting the partner universities. It involves members of local teaching support units to ensure that the EPiC TLC's activities and offers complement and enhance local teaching support units' work, rather than duplicating or replacing it. During EPICUR-SHAPE-IT, the 4.3 Task Team will strive to curate resources and offers to be included on the EPiC TLC virtual platform and check offer fit with the EPiC TLC objectives. Quality of the individual offers integrated in the EPiC TLC shall be assured by the contributing partners.

In the context of Task 4.3.3 Training for EPICUR teaching staff, offers will be specifically developed for the EPiC TLC, in accordance with its objectives (as delineated above). To allow for meaningful creation of added value and synergetic effects, the EPiC TLC also relies on the sharing of locally developed offers and resources. Thus, the EPiC TLC will allow different stakeholders to both benefit from and contribute to the EPiC TLC:

- **Teaching support units** of all EPICUR partners may choose to include offers from the EPiC TLC into their locally established certification programmes, as they deem purposeful.
- **Teaching support staff** of all EPICUR partners may draw upon resources/ materials/ network and competence development offers provided in the EPiC TLC.
- In addition to locally available teaching (development) support, **teaching staff** of all EPICUR partners can find competence development offers, resources/materials and networking opportunities in the EPiC TLC.
- **Teaching support units** of all EPICUR partners may share/open-up selected offers suitable for EPICUREan teaching and learning development needs.
- **Teaching support staff** of all EPICUR partner universities may share experiences, resources and materials they find helpful or need in their regular task-fulfilment.
- **Teaching staff** of all EPICUR partners may share experiences and materials/resources they find helpful in their teaching.

In the establishment of the EPiC TLC and its respective offers and activities, all EPICUR partners will address the compliance with European and local principles of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). With respect to intellectual property and licensing of shared materials, credit and responsibility for shared contents will be aligned with OER standards and the Digital Strategy decided by EPICUR-SHAPE-IT Task 3.1 Digital Strategy (compare footnote 5 in this document).

Regulations concerning access and funding for participation in trainings offered via the EPiC TLC should be addressed by the EPICUR Alliance during EPICUR-SHAPE-IT.

When the EPICUR Alliance has adopted a legal entity form, the EPiC TLC can be integrated to fit in with the new legal framework. Respective adaptations and amendments of the EPiC TLC's ToR will then be considered and implemented based on the respective regulations by the responsible units.

A concept for sustainable operation of the EPiC TLC beyond EU funding of EPICUR-SHAPE IT shall be subsequently developed by the Alliance based on recommendations provided by the 4.3 Task Team.

12.1.4. Members and responsibilities

The EPiC TLC strives to promote a culture of collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement in teaching and learning, with the ultimate goal to enhance the quality of education provided by partner universities within the EPICUR Alliance. The EPiC TLC is guided by principles of inclusivity, transparency, and accountability, with input and feedback from all EPICUR partner universities being taken into consideration.

The 4.3 Task Team, including representatives from all EPICUR partner universities, oversees the creation of the EPiC TLC (Task 4.3.1, lead: UFR), establishes its virtual space on the EIUC platform (Task 4.3.2, lead: AUTH) and organises training formats (Task 4.3.2, lead: UFR). To ensure the successful

establishment of the EPiC TLC, the 4.3 Task Team will also strive to manage the operations of the EPiC TLC within EPICUR-SHAPE-IT, i.e., curating and coordinating offers and moderating the Community of Practice.

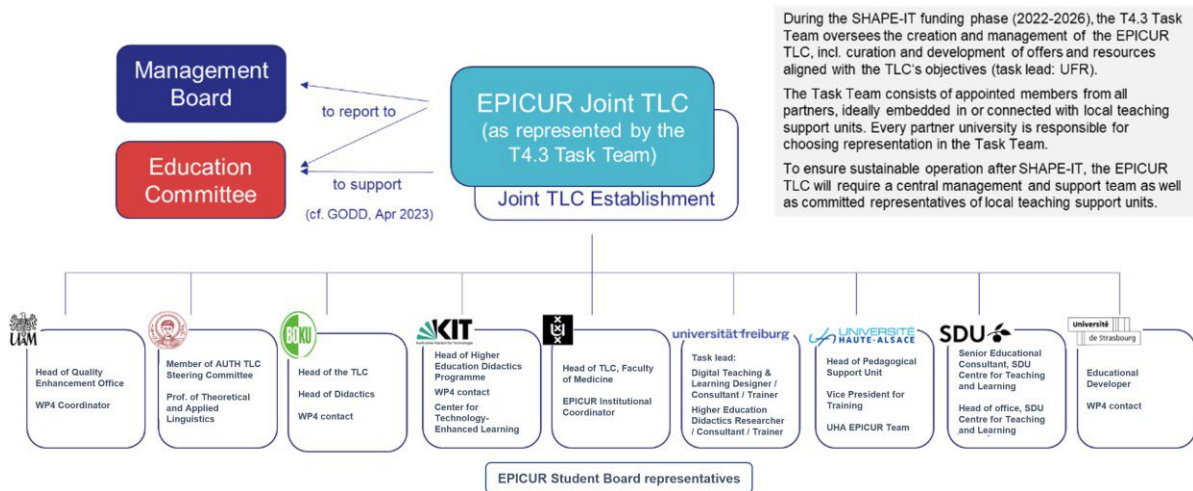


Figure 9: Members and responsibilities of the EPiC TLC during EPICUR-SHAPE-IT

12.1.5. Operational procedures: Terms of Reference Task 4.3 Team

These terms of reference relate to the organisation of the Task 4.3 Team of the EPICUR-SHAPE-IT project.

12.1.5.1. Function/Scope

The Task Team will jointly work on the task, in particular on sub-task 4.3.1 (Terms of Reference). Once the Terms of Reference are adopted, sub-teams may be formed based on task members' respective interests and competences to focus on sub-task 4.3.2 *Establishment of the virtual space of the TLC*, and 4.3.3 *Trainings for EPICUR teaching staff*, respectively.

12.1.5.2. Members

Task 4.3 is jointly led by two representatives of the University of Freiburg. The Task Team is composed of at least one representative from each EPiCUR partner university, embedded in or connected to local teaching support units. The Task Team is complemented by two representatives from the EPiCUR Student Board.

12.1.5.3. Responsibilities

In general, Task 4.3 is organised to allow for an inclusive and participatory process:

The Task Team members are asked to share and discuss their perspectives and ideas during and beyond the joint meetings. Task team members are also expected to serve as a bridge to coordinate drafts or deliverables with their local teaching support unit leaders, as appropriate.

The Task Team leaders are responsible for coordination and monitoring of the Task progress and for delivering the milestones and deliverables as listed in the project proposal to the WP4 lead.

12.1.5.4. Operational procedures and communication

Meeting concept

Task Team meetings are organised according to a “flipped” meeting concept, i.e., team members individually complete pre-meeting tasks asynchronously. Meeting sessions then focus on discussion and collaboration activities and decision making. Meetings are followed-up by comprehensive meeting documentation.

Meeting organisation

The Task Team (or respective sub-task workgroup) meets online via Zoom in bi-monthly intervals (i.e., every second month, with the exception of summer and winter breaks to be determined upon need) on every third Tuesday of the month from 11.00am-12.30pm CET¹¹.

In-person workshops for Task Team members shall be organised at partner universities, preferably in combination with Alliance-wide EPiCUR meetings such as the annual Forum, to further elaborate and advance task and/or sub-task outcomes.

In terms of online meetings, the 4.3 Task Team leaders are responsible for determining the date and time suitable for as many institutions as possible to be present (e.g., via an online date finder).

Once the date and time are determined, the meeting organisers shall send out an online meeting invitation at least 7 days prior to the meeting. The invitation shall include the tentative agenda and the pre-meeting tasks. Task Team members are free to suggest edits to the agenda up until the time of the meeting.

Representation in meetings

In case a Task Team member is unavailable for a meeting, they ensure their university is represented by an alternate member.

12.1.5.5. Communication

Online meetings are held via Zoom. Outside meetings, the chat function of the common MS Teams platform is used to communicate with the entire Task Team and/or with individual Task Team members, as well as to store meeting documentation and to allow for the joint editing of documents.

¹¹ Revision August 2024: The Task Team has decided that meetings will henceforth take place every second month. Consequently, the phrase "The Task Team (or respective sub-task workgroup) meets online via Zoom in monthly intervals (with the exception of summer and winter breaks to be determined upon need) on every third Tuesday of the month from 11.00am-12.30pm CET" has been revised to reflect this change.

12.1.5.6. *Decision-making*

Aquorum within a Task Team meeting can be formed if at least half of the EPiCUR partners are represented. Decision-making and conflict resolution within the Task Team will be handled and solved by consensus (votes during meetings by show of hands, and, if needed, outside meetings via written procedures, i.e., chat/email). Should the consensus not be achievable, a majority vote will be used: each structure member (i.e., partner university) will hold one vote.

12.1.5.7. *Minutes*

Each participant of the Task Team (respectively, sub-task workgroup) is responsible for taking their own notes. The Task 4.3 lead are responsible for creating an outcome protocol to be shared with the Task Team as follows:

A follow-up email including links to the meeting documentation (i.e., Powerpoint slides and outcome protocol) shall be shared with all meeting invitees within one week after the meeting. The Meeting documentation will be uploaded to the following folder on the MS Teams platform:

EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT > WP4 > Meetings and EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT > WP4 > Tasks > Task 4.3 > Meetings.

Any objections or complements to the items included in the outcome protocol shall be raised and brought to the 4.3 Task leads' attention via bilateral email within one week after it has been shared.

12.1.6. Evaluation, Reporting and Communication

The 4.3 Task Team is committed to ensure continuous improvement concerning quality of EPiCUR learning and teaching offers. Offers and processes of the EPiC TLC are interconnected with other tasks and shall be iteratively aligned with

advancements throughout EPICUR- SHAPE-IT. Reflecting dynamic developments in (European) higher education as well as in local teaching support units at EPICUR partners, the EPiC TLC will rely on a quality management cycle to continuously improve its offers and services. Guided by principles of quality management, evaluation of the EPiC TLC shall especially consider user perspectives in the continuous development of the EPiC TLC's offers and activities. In addition to EPICUR partners' teaching support staff and EPICUR teaching staff, this also includes feedback provided by students as they are the ultimate beneficiaries of quality (development) of teaching and learning offers.

Therefore, in addition to relying on EPICUR's Project Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) and Project Internal Evaluation Plan (PIEP) practices (compare EPICUR-SHAPE-IT proposal), the 4.3 Task Team intends to conduct formative evaluation on a regular basis. The quality and goal attainment of developed offers shall also be evaluated using summative practices to provide information to the QAP and PIEP processes, to revise the ToR and to further develop offers.

According to the validated EPICUR Governance Organisation Description Document (GODD, April 2023), in fulfilment of Milestone 25, the Terms of Reference for the EPiC TLC shall be submitted to the EPICUR Management Board. Following a change in deadlines, this submission has been moved from M6 (April) to M9 (July 2023). Milestone 26, the TLC evaluation report including recommendations, shall be submitted to the EPICUR Education Committee in M24 (October 2024). Deliverable 4.2, the Report on the functioning of and procedures of the Teaching and Learning Centre including the Terms of Reference and Report of the first year of activities shall be submitted (as a PDF available in English) to the Education Committee and Management Board.

The 4.3 Task Team shall make recommendations for a communication concept for the EPiC TLC to be included in the next revision of the ToR. This concept shall be coordinated and aligned with WP7 strategy and activities.

12.1.7. Adoption and Revision of ToR

The establishment of the EPiC TLC is work in progress and the EPiC TLC's offers and services are to be developed, implemented, evaluated and, accordingly, optimised in EPICUR-SHAPE-IT. Moreover, offers and processes of the EPiC TLC are interrelated with other developments and tasks, e.g., as specified in the EPICUR-SHAPE-IT proposal. Therefore, these ToR are subject to changes reflecting EPICUR's advancements. Thus, the ToR shall be subject to annual revision and amendment.

According to GODD, these Terms of Reference are to be submitted to and adopted by the EPICUR Management Board.

To ensure applicability and relevance, review and amendment shall rely on evidence-based recommendations of the 4.3 Task Team. Any change requests should be addressed to the T4.3 leader(s).

As adopted by the EPICUR Management Board, the current version of the EPiC TLC's ToR is applicable until January 31, 2026.

12.1.8. Sources

1. EPICUR Alliance (2022). EPICUR Shaping Higher Education in Transition (EPICUR-SHAPE-IT). Project proposal in Erasmus+ Programme (ERASMUS) Application Form ERASMUS-EDU-2022- EUR-UNIV] — Partnerships for Excellence – European Universities
2. Felten, Peter (2013). Principles of Good Practice in SoTL. *Teaching and Learning Inquiry: The ISSOTL Journal*, 1, 121–125. [doi:10.20343/teachlearninqu.1.1.121](https://doi.org/10.20343/teachlearninqu.1.1.121)
3. EPICUR Alliance Coordination Group (April, 2023). EPICUR Transition Governance Organisation Description Document (GODD). *Approved EB 31/03/2023*.

12.2. Annex 2: “Tour of the EPiC TLC”: Screenshots of the virtual space (for non-members)

The screenshot displays the EPiCUR website's 'Member View' for the EPiC TLC. The page features a navigation menu with 'Content', 'Timeline', 'Info', and 'Members'. A large banner image shows a collage of university buildings. The main content area includes a welcome message, a video titled 'Welcome to the EPiC TLC', and three sections: 'Let's connect!', 'Let's explore!', and 'Let's grow!'. A 'News' section highlights an event on September 11th. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'BLOG', 'WHO IS WHO', and 'FORUM', along with contact information for the teaching support unit. The footer contains logos for the European Union and various partner organizations: DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service), the Dutch Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Poland, Baden-Württemberg (Ministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst), the Hellenic Republic (Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs), and France 2030.

Let's connect!

Welcome to Let's connect!, the networking and collaboration space for our Community of Practice. You're invited to increase yourself in a world of collaborative opportunities.

Engage in inspiring events, explore special networks, international peers, use the provided tools to collaborate, exchange and discuss ideas and experiences, innovate and elevate your teaching, learning here and with your online international peers.

Together we will shape the EPiCUR Community of Practice in Teaching and Learning!

Community Events

Join us and get topics on the upcoming events of the EPiCUR Community of Practice to teaching and learning to get to know and network with other educators and educational competences development.

Upcoming events: Invitations & Registration:

- EPiC 2024 & CoTeach (1 Sept 2024, 12-13 OCT, online)
- Journal of Best Practice Guide (20 Sept 2024, 19-14 OCT, online)

Not to be missed - invitation to the launch of the online Best Practice Guide: Resources to support the design and delivery of EPiCUR courses (19, 20 Sept, 2024, 19-14 OCT)

The Guides to develop quality education and teachers at EPiCUR universities. It shows a wide range of examples and teaching resources and experiences. And because it's an ongoing resource, it suggests new inputs and additional materials.

Come and find out what the guide offers teachers and educational developers engaged with developing and teaching EPiCUR courses and how you can contribute to it. After reading you'll discover the guide will inspire you to build up for an adventure exploring the guide as you can find out which can offer you and your teaching colleagues. And who can need your help? Come along and bring a colleague or two!

Register via this link to get the Guide link and a calendar reminder. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Would an expert click the link below to access the event documentation (pre-workshop 18th, 19th, 20th)

- EPiCUR Forum 2024 (1-12 June, Multiscreen)

Documentation coming soon!

- EPiCUR Forum (11-13 June 2024) - Exploratory Studies: Teaching Following Progressive Pedagogy in European Alliance (Université de Metz, France, Multiscreen, France)

Send opening of EPiC TIC (25 Feb 2024)

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Special Interest Groups focus specific topics in teaching and learning. These groups bring together individuals from across the Alliance who share a topic of interest and want to exchange and collaborate. Join the groups that sound interesting to you and get to know their thoughts and experiences or work jointly on ideas and development!

Click below to view SIGs and join!

- for educators
- for educational developers
- for teaching competences developers
- for digital education operators
- for administrative teaching support staff
- for EPiC TIC heritage purposes

Collaborative Teaching Practice spaces

Use our Collaborative Teaching Practice spaces to connect with other educators from across the EPiCUR Alliance and plan co-teaching. Here, you can meet and share course materials and ideas!

Click to open the list of Collaborative Teaching Practice spaces.

CoTeachConnector

Looking for a colleague to co-develop or co-teach a new course? Want to find a guest lecturer for your class? Want to give your students to gain insights from an expert from another country and/or discipline? Want to collaborate in creating innovative learning efforts?

Find peers for teaching collaborations across the EPiCUR Alliance with our CoTeachConnector.

Your wishes

What wishes Special Interest Groups could you be to join another module in the future?

Would you like a Collaborative Teaching Space to jointly explore and/or accompany your cross-institution teaching projects?

Click to share your comment/idea.

Contact & Support

Please search our EPiCUR website with questions, contribution ideas or requests concerning the EPiC TIC.

For ideas, questions and share insights with peers on our EPiC TIC Forum.

FORUM

Contact your teaching support unit here:

- Adnan Mikicewicz University, Poland
- Amalou University of Tlemcen
- KIT Karlsruhe Institute of Technology
- University of Amsterdam
- University of Fribourg
- University of Haute-Normandie
- University of Jyväskylä and Life Sciences, Finland
- University of Southern Denmark
- University of Gävle

EPiCUR EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
EPiCUR Inter-University Campus

Repository > EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching & Learning (Category) > EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning > Let's explore!

Member View

Dashboard: Content, Info

Navigation icons: Repository, Personal Workspace, Achievements, Communication, Administration

Let's explore!

Welcome to **Let's explore!**, your gateway to a treasure trove of resources for **(international) Teaching & Learning**.

Discover what teaching and learning in EPiCUR is all about. Dive into our curated collection of featured resources, explore a comprehensive repository that caters to your educational (development) interests, and - in the future - access and contribute to an array of Open Educational Resources (OERs).

Uncover the tools, knowledge, and insights that will empower you to excel in your teaching journey.

EPiC TLC - Home

Let's connect!

Let's grow!

Discover EPiCUREan Teaching & Learning

Find central resources, guidelines and examples of teaching and learning in EPiCUR!

- > What is EPiCUR?
- > Why teach in EPiCUR?
- > What is an EPiCUR course? What is meant by EPiCUREan Teaching & Learning?
- ✓ Your guide to designing and developing your EPiCUR course

Best Practice Guide

- > How to teach in EPiCUR: practical information

EPiC TLC | Let's explore
About
Let's explore

Repository of Didactic and Pedagogic Resources

In this comprehensive collection, compiled by EPiCUR teachers, you may browse resources relevant to teaching and learning. You can also filter for specific interests and contribute resources to share with the Community.

- EPiCUR teaching practice
- Research papers related to EPiCUREan teaching & learning
- Further helpful resources

[Click to access repository.](#)

OER - Open Educational Resources

Open Educational Resources are free educational materials that can be used and edited with little or no restrictions.

[Click here to discover OER materials and use them for your teaching context. Likewise, you can share your teaching and learning materials with other EPiCUR teachers here.](#)

[Click to access.](#)

Funding Tips

Find inspiration on how to get compensation for your teaching innovation.

- > [Click to find helpful weblinks and files.](#)

Your suggestions

Are you missing any information or would you like to contribute something?

- > [Click to share your comments or ideas.](#)

Contact & Support

Please reach out to tlc@epicur.edu.eu with questions, contribution ideas or requests concerning the EPiC TLC.

Find Q&A, join discussions and share insights with peers in our EPiC TLC Forum.

FORUM

- > [Contact your teaching support unit here:](#)

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EPiCUR EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
EPiCUR Inter-University Campus

Repository > EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching & Learning (Category) > EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching and Learning > Let's grow!

Dashboard
Repository
Personal Workspace
Achievements
Communication
Administration

Let's grow!

Welcome to Let's Grow! where the focus is on teaching as a professional. Get empowered as an educator, check out the 'why,' 'what,' and 'how' of growth in teaching. Discover why ongoing teaching competence development is invaluable, explore what opportunities and resources are available to support your growth as an educator and make your efforts in high-quality teaching distinguishable. Enjoy continuous development and (re)discover the joy of professional teaching and learning.

EPiC TLC

EPiC TLC - Home
Let's connect!
Let's explore!

Why?

Teaching benefits from professionalization and teaching competences are required, e.g., for (international) applications in academia. Yet, how do we develop and showcase our professional teaching competence? Make your efforts visible and make them count, not only towards your work satisfaction but also towards your career; join the program!

> More soon...

What?

The EPiC TLC's optional competence-oriented teaching professionalisation program may support you in advancing your pedagogical competences. Get recognition for your teaching competence with a focus on skills needed to provide teaching in international and intercultural teaching and learning settings.

The upcoming EPiCUR Program to "Professional Development in International Teaching & Learning" will provide you with comprehensive information on how to continuously enhance your teaching skills with the help of a highly modular, flexible and progressive professionalization approach.

- First training offers - coming soon!
- Teaching and Learning in intercultural contexts: Further your competences in Teaching & Learning in Intercultural Contexts via our alliance-wide online training offer, 30 Sept., 9-13 CET. [Click here to register for the training!](#)
- Online module for teaching staff on lifelong learning and employability. More information coming soon!

How?

Professionalize by participating in workshops, and collaborative learning experiences, as well as online training modules. Via the trainings, you'll also have the opportunity to collaborate and share ideas and experiences with other academics across the EPiCUR alliance.

> More soon...

Contact & Support

Please reach out to tlc@epicur.edu.eu with questions, contribution ideas or requests concerning the EPiC TLC. Find Q&A, join discussions and share insights with peers in our EPiC TLC Forum.

FORUM

> Contact your teaching support unit here:

FRANCE 2030

Co-funded by the European Union

DAAD
Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap

Ministry of Science and Higher Education
Republic of Poland

Baden-Württemberg
MINISTERIUM FÜR WISSENSCHAFT, FORSCHUNG UND KUNST

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs

EPiCUR Inter-University Campus

🔍
👤

Repository > Let's share!
Actions

Content
Info
Settings
Export
Permissions

View
Manage
Sorting

Add New Item
Customise Page

Let's share!

What are Open Educational Resources (OER)?

"Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching, learning and research materials in any medium – digital or otherwise – that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions. OER form part of 'Open Solutions', alongside Free and Open Source software (FOSS), Open Access (OA), Open Data (OD) and crowdsourcing platforms." (UNESCO)

Why are OER 'open'?

THE 5R OF OPEN
Defining the „Open“ in „Open Content“ and „Open Educational Resources (OER)“

- 1

Retain

the right to make, own, and control copies of the content
- 2

Reuse

the right to use the content in a wide range of ways
- 3

Revise

the right to adapt, adjust, modify, or alter the content itself
- 4

Remix

the right to combine the original or revised content with other material to create something new
- 5

Re-distribute

the right to share copies of the original content, your revisions, or your remixes with others

Missing OER here?

We are currently preparing this space ... so that in the near future you can access and contribute to an array of Open Education Resources.

In the meantime, if you are a member of an EPiCUR partner university and would like to be part of the discussion in EPiCUR, join our **Special Interest Group "Open Educational Resources & Practices OER/OEP"** on the EPiC TLC (available to you after login to the EPiCUR InterUniversity Campus).

For more detailed information on OER and OER repositories, take a look at the Resource Sheet on OER/OEP of the EPiCUR Best Practice Guide.

Contact & Support

If you are an educator or educational developer/supporter at one of the universities of the EPiCUR University Alliance, use your regular university login data to login to the EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching & Learning (EPiC TLC) where you will find helpful opportunities to connect, explore and grow!

EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching & Learning

Please reach out to tlc@epicur.edu.eu

- with questions
- with ideas for contributions
- with any other interests

What is EPiCUR's stance on OER?

"EPiCUR will invest in the creation of Open Educational Resources (OER) and a virtual space in order to support their delivery and sharing by using the Creative Commons licensing scheme" (EPiCUR Grant Agreement)

With this space, EPiCUR is currently developing and establishing an Open Educational Resources infrastructure and service.

How can we all benefit from sharing materials as OER?

Higher education institutions benefit from an increase in the quality of teaching and increased visibility. In addition, the strategic use of OER can mean a more efficient use of resources, as material created by staff during working hours is re-used.

As educators you benefit from publishing and using OER mainly because of their participation in the relevant community. You do not have to develop every single worksheet yourselves, and at the same time they distinguish yourselves as experts in certain fields. For the sake of gaining public awareness, OER opens up teaching as an additional field alongside research.

In addition, students can be motivated to create material directly from courses, which in turn can be published under a free licence. This is one of the reasons why OER are considered a catalyst for modern teaching and learning arrangements.

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[No Title]

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap

Ministry of Science and Higher Education
Republic of Poland

Baden-Württemberg
MINISTERIUM FÜR WISSENSCHAFT, FORSCHUNG UND KUNST

HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs

FRANCE 2030

12.3. Annex 3: Example EPiC TLC Newsletter



EPiC TLC NEWSLETTER

August 2024

EPiC TLC & YOU

Cross-alliance service! Via the EPiCUR Centre for International Teaching & Learning (EPiC TLC), we can **network, professionalise, and share resources** across our European University Alliance in a closed virtual space. All teaching (support) staff may contribute to and benefit from offers created by or shared within our EPiCUR Community of Practice. Experience and share the joy of high-quality international teaching and learning: <https://s.kit.edu/epictlc>





FEATURE & FOCUS

Check it out! In the **Repository of Didactic and Pedagogic Resources**, compiled by EPiCUR educators (like you), you may browse resources relevant to international teaching and learning, e.g., weblinks to assessment tools and educational research. You can also filter for specific interests and contribute resources to share with the Community. [Click here](#) to access the Repository.

By the way, the **Best Practice Guide: Resources to support the design and delivery of EPiCUR courses** will be available as of 20 Sept., 2024 (info on launch event below).

EVENTS & TRAININGS

Sign up and tell your friends! Bring your lunch & join online on **11 Sept., 12-13 CET** for our **EPiCEduTalk & Café** on **Teaching Sustainability: Using the SDGs as Building Blocks to Address Students as Change Makers**. [Register here](#) to receive the Zoom link!

Experience the online **Launch of the 'Best Practice Guide: Resources to support the design and delivery of EPiCUR courses'** on **20 Sept., 2024, 13-14 CET**. [Register here](#) to receive the Zoom link. Discover valuable resources and learn how you can contribute. Invite your colleagues!



EPiCUR EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

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NEWSLETTER

August 2024

COMMUNITY & PRACTICE

Gain insights! The *Special Interest Group (SIG) Open Educational Resources & Practices (OER/OEP)* welcomes everyone interested in using, creating, editing and sharing open learning materials and practices. You don't need to have any prior knowledge. Colleagues at all EPiCUR universities are invited to **join the SIG** to exchange ideas and experiences and explore collaboration potential. **The first meeting of this SIG will take place online on Tue, 24 Sept., 2024 (10-11 CET). [Join the SIG](#) to receive more info.**



TEACH & CONNECT

Find your match! This month's search features [Dr. Hana Fehrenbach](#). Hana is a postdoctoral fellow at the Chair of Public and Nonprofit Management, Faculty of Economics and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Freiburg. This fall 2024/25, she is offering a block course on cross-sector collaboration in the context of artificial intelligence. Should you be interested in a collaborative opportunity, check out Hana's entry in our [CoTeachConnector](#). Hana is looking forward to your ideas and perspectives!

CONTRIBUTE & COMMUNICATE

Share the joy! Tell your colleagues about the EPiC TLC and welcome them into our Community of Practice!

The EPiC TLC is what we make it:

If you have a contribution idea (e.g., for an EPiCEduTalk or a new SIG) contact us: tlc@epicur.edu.eu

On behalf of the EPiC TLC team,
Dorthe Hutz-Nierhoff & Lisa Hüther-Pape



12.4. Annex: Policy context

12.4.1.1. *European Universities Alliances initiative*

At the Gothenburg Summit in 2017, European Union (EU) leaders set out a vision for education and culture. In its December 2017 conclusions, the European Council called on EU member states, the Council and the Commission to take forward a number of initiatives, including strengthen strategic partnerships across the EU between higher education institutions and encourage the emergence, of "European universities", consisting of bottom-up networks of universities across the EU that will enable students to obtain a degree by combining studies in several EU countries and contribute to the international competitiveness of European universities.

European Universities are transnational alliances that will lead the way towards the universities of the future, promoting European values and identity, and revolutionising the quality and competitiveness of European higher education. The European Universities are also a flagship initiative for the construction of the European Education Area.

12.4.2. EPiCUR Alliance: European Partnership for an Innovative Campus Unifying Regions

EPiCUR, the European Partnership for an Innovative Campus Unifying Regions, is a first-generation European University Alliance, dedicated to shaping European Society in Transition through the development of collaborative inter- and transdisciplinary teaching and learning.

The EPiCUR Alliance's core ambition is to transform education, research and transfer practices and opportunities across its member universities in order to develop original cutting-edge solutions and train new generations of European change makers able to shape a European society in transition and help overcome the daunting challenges.

EPICUR brings together the distinctive and complementary forces of its nine member universities as well as the experience and creative potential of their regions. Its knowledge-creating teams are joining forces to work on some of the most demanding global challenges of our days, including EPICUR’s initial priority areas **Sustainable transformation, European Values, Global Health** and **Future Intelligence**. Such an endeavour requires interdisciplinary approaches and strong connections with regional academic and socio-economic ecosystems. EPICUR therefore must create a polycentric network of mutually empowering regional knowledge hubs future-proofed for tackling these global challenges.

12.4.3. Partners of the Alliance

Institution name and acronym	Country
Université de Strasbourg (UNISTRA)	France
Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu (AMU)	Poland
Aristotelio Panepistimio Thessalonikis (AUTH)	Greece
Universität für Bodenkultur Wien (BOKU)	Austria
Karlsruher Institut für Technologie (KIT)	Germany
Université de Haute-Alsace (UHA)	France
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg (ALU-FR/UFR)	Germany
Universiteit van Amsterdam (UvA)	The Netherlands
Syddansk Universitet (SDU)	Denmark

12.4.4. Overview of the EPICUR-SHAPE-IT project

The EPICUR Alliance has won the second call for application of the European Universities Initiative by the European Commission and has therefore been tasked to roll out its successful pilot phase. The EPICUR- SHAPE-IT projects involves all nine EPICUR partner universities and runs from November 2022 to October 2026 with a potential extension for two more years.

Following a stepwise approach to secure deeper and wider cooperation, EPICUR will move from the pilot project-based management approach (Phase 1) to a

structural integration of policies and activities (Phase 2), paving the way for sustainable long-term cooperation in a whole-of-institution framework (Phase 3).

The EPiCUR-SHAPE-IT work plan has been structured to implement the Phase 2 transformation strategy by combining a limited number of work packages closely articulated with EPiCUR's core missions. Drawing on EPiCUR's key pilot phase achievements, the 7 work packages have been designed to achieve:

- An agile and inclusive governance integrated with member universities' bodies and ensuring quality assurance and buy-in within Alliance communities (WP1), together with a comprehensive impact assessment policy (WP7)
- Support infrastructures and services for digital cooperation (WP3) and mobility (WP2).
- A vision articulating purpose, formats and procedures for education (WP4), research- and transfer-oriented training (WP6) and societal engagement (WP5).
