

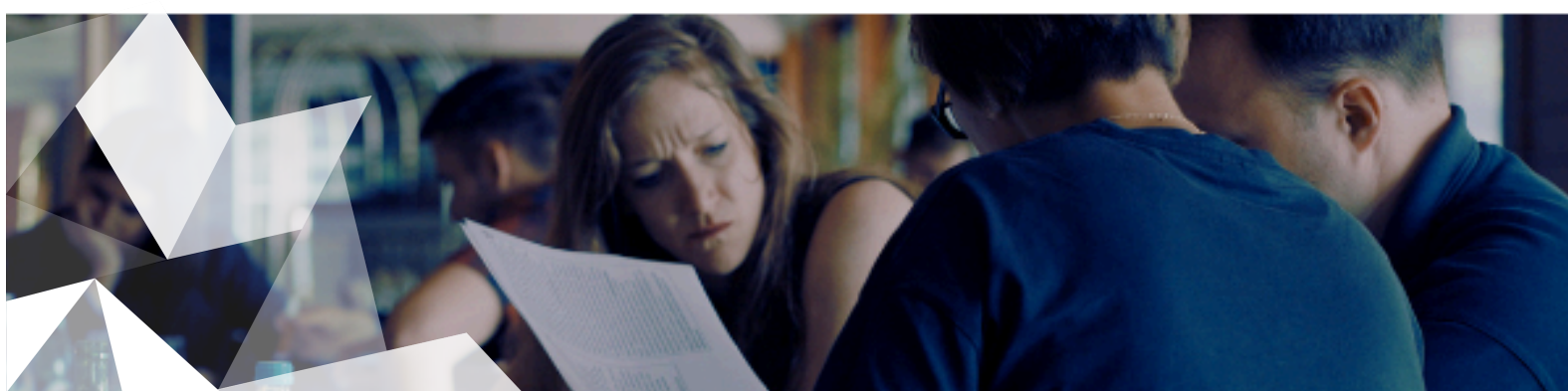
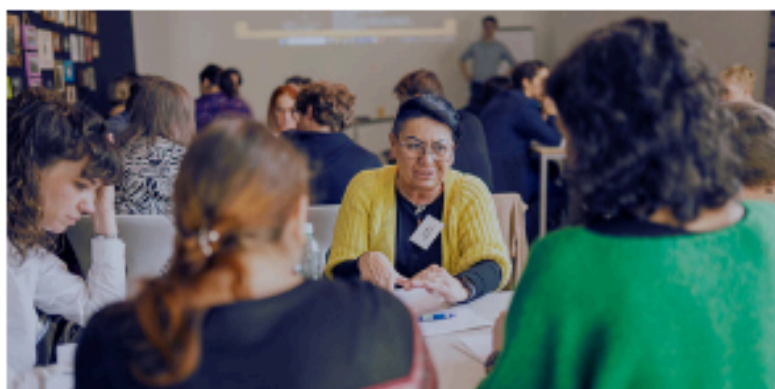


**EuroClio**

Inspiring History  
and Citizenship Educators

# Review Guidelines for the Creation of Educational Materials

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## Cover image

EuroClio photography collage.

## Introduction

The aim of these guidelines is to provide a standardized way of creating and reviewing the educational materials that EuroClio produces. As we have produced many materials over the years, content can become outdated, links can stop working, and better teaching practice can be developed. We have thus created these guidelines in an effort to determine which materials are in need of updates and how to update them, and, in some cases, which materials are no longer fit for use. The creation of this guide was a collaboration between EuroClio staff and trainees.

## Review Guidelines for the Creation of Educational Materials

Unless otherwise specified in the Grant Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding of a project, the following guidelines should be considered when developing and reviewing educational materials.

The guidelines are divided into different categories: content, methodologies and pedagogies, and technical aspects. However, some more general intersectional elements need to be considered. If there are different reviewers considering the different aspects included, you can just share the relevant section with them.

The guidelines should be shared with those involved in designing and reviewing the educational materials. They can also be used to assess the relevance of materials developed in the past.

Please note that an introductory paragraph should be included to situate the authors and reviewers in the tone of the materials. This will ensure that the feedback shared is productive and can be applied to the materials. Thus, knowing the materials' aims and learning outcomes will help reviewers understand the design process and avoid out-of-topic comments. It is also important to clarify the expectations and timeline of the review beforehand.

To give an example, please consider the guidelines of the Contested Histories Initiative below:

*The Contested Histories Initiative is run by the Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation, a research centre based at EuroClio - European Association of History Educators. The initiative aims to promote public awareness and support for decision-makers to responsibly and effectively respond to controversies over historical legacies.*

*The objective of each case study is to provide evidence of debate and controversy over tangible or intangible historical legacies and to describe the decision-making processes at work. The data collected in the case studies is input into a database and plotted using mapping software. They will form the building blocks for analysis, serving as the evidence base from which guidelines and best practices for dealing with disputed historical legacies can be developed. Cases will be published on our website ([www.contestedhistories.org](http://www.contestedhistories.org)) and, in select instances, as part of IHJR's Occasional Paper series as a more in-depth piece of research.*

*We kindly ask you to guide your review with the idea that the paper is not intended to be an academic paper in the traditional sense, but rather it is intended to offer an understandable and clear breakdown of the case that would be easily understood by policy makers and educators.*

In this regard, it is important also to add check questions throughout the guidelines to make sure the materials relate to the aims and learning outcomes. For example,

- Do the activities respond to the key questions?
- Do the activities help learners develop the identified skills and competences?
- Is the assessment appropriate for the skills and competences identified?
- Do the learning activities relate to the project aims?

## Instructions for Reviewers

Please consider if the materials are:

- A. publishable,
- B. publishable with minor editing,
- C. publishable with major editing,
- D. not publishable

Please also consider, at the end,

- A. what are the strong points of this educational material.
- B. what are the points for improvement for this educational material.

Please use a constructive and encouraging tone, even if the review is negative.

## General Quality Indicators for Designing and Reviewing Educational Materials

### → Feasibility of the Materials

- Is it appropriate to the socio-political and historical context of the learners (if part of the project)?
- Is it appropriate for the indicated age of the learners?
- Does it give enough background information for the teacher to implement?

### → Adaptability

- Can the materials be used in different socio-political contexts?
- Can the materials be used in schools (or educational settings) with different infrastructures (offline and online implementation)? And if not, can it be adapted easily?
- Does it consider learners' different learning styles and needs (e.g., higher and lower-attaining learners)? If not, can it be adapted easily?
- Are the materials uploaded in a format that allows users to make changes (i.e. Google Docs, Office Word or Open Formats)?

### → Language

- Is the language accessible (plain English, no academic jargon)?
- Is there a glossary that gives ready-to-use explanations of complex concepts?
- Is it appropriate for the indicated age?
- Is the language gender-inclusive and neutral?
- Is it specified when the vocabulary of perpetrators is used and explained why?

- Does it consider cultural sensitivities when using specific terms, and explain why a specific term is used? (For example, the term "gypsy" is not accepted in some countries, but in Spain, it is being used by the Roma community).

#### → Inclusivity

- Is the design dyslexic-friendly (for example, the fonts, line spacing, use of columns)?
- Is the design suited for those blind or partially sighted (i.e. colours are suited for those who are colourblind)?
- If the format and funding allow, do images have (auditory) descriptions for people who are blind or partially sighted?
- Are the materials suited for online and offline use?
- Are the materials available in different languages?

## Design and Technical Quality Indicators

#### → Layout and Design

- Is the document user-friendly?
- Is what the materials contain clear at first glance?
- Does it have colours that can be easily printed in black and white for offline use?
- Can it be used on different screens (i.e. phone, tablet, and computer)?
- Does it contain visual aids for learners with reading difficulties?

#### → Visuals (if any):

*When dealing with historical content linked to moments of conflict, violence and discrimination, it is essential to consider what images are included. It is important to have a conversation with the authors on the ethics of visibility and to avoid using images with discriminatory or stereotypical representations or images where acts of violence are being perpetrated. If any of these are included, it should also be made clear that the message should not be replicated.*

- Are the images explained? Do they have a description?
- Do any of the images represent moments of discrimination?
- When images used by the perpetrators are included, is it explained what the motive and use of the photo explained?
- Are the images and sources used in the activity copyright-free or cleared?
- Are there copyright statements with links to the actual copyright statements and the owner?
- Are they good enough quality visuals (i.e. not pixelated, can be zoomed in)?

→ Additional Resources (if any):

*It is important to establish a quality check for the resources added to ensure that they are of good quality and appropriate for the topic of the materials and their use in the classroom. If the resources are added with another purpose, such as to provide background information for educators on lesser-known events or histories, please make it clear in the materials:*

- Are additional resources correctly referenced?
- Are the references correct and consistent?
- Are they curated?
- Are the links to references clearly marked?
- Do the links, QR codes and embedded elements work?
- Are they freely accessible and open access?

→ Acknowledgements

- Is it clear who made the materials (i.e., the authors, editors, and reviewers are listed)?
- Are the donors acknowledged?
- Is it clear when the materials were made?
- Is it clear how to reference the materials?
- Are the materials compliant with donor requirements (i.e. in the case of the EU, acknowledgement of funding, use of logo, and disclaimer)?
- Is it clear what can be done with the materials (i.e., they are licensed under a Creative Commons or In Copyright – Educational Use Permitted licence? Please note that EuroClio's default licence is CC-BY 4.0 (international).

→ Maps and Graphs

- Are there legends that are easy to understand and give proper context to the map and/or graph?
- Are they downloadable? If yes, is the link included?
- Is the name of the file descriptive enough for people to be able to find it easily?
- Is the file available in a reasonable size? If not, are there different versions?

→ For materials that are part of something bigger (i.e. a lesson plan taken from a longer toolkit).

- Is there an explanation that there are additional resources linked to the materials?
- Does the section include all linked to resources, images and visuals?



## Content Quality Indicators

### → Content of the activities included

- Is the text (historically) accurate?
- Are there factual errors?
- Are sources reputable (or, when not, is this elaborated upon)?
- Does the content pass the test of time?
- For materials made some time ago, is the content still relevant or up to date?
- Does the content provoke learners' curiosity and thought?
- Can the examples included be used or modified for use in different contexts, e.g. age group, curricular requirements, etc?

### → Instructions to implement the activities

- Is the activity easy to understand, making use of accessible language?
- Does the activity content fill a gap in education (i.e. is the content innovative enough, covering a niche or a topic less explored)?
- Does the activity provide enough background information and context for educators and learners alike to use it appropriately?
- Or vice-versa, is there too much information presented?
- Is the written content for learners supported by appropriate visuals and images?
- If pertinent, does the activity reference standards and guidelines, such as the CoE Competencies for Democratic Culture?

### → Inclusivity of the content included

- Are the pasts of all learners in classrooms in Europe represented in our materials?
- Are the pasts of the people of modern Europe represented in our materials?
- When we use visuals, do they show the diversity of people who were or are in Europe and respect their dignity?
- When we include the work of historians and other 'authority' figures do we draw on work from a diverse and representative range of people, including from beyond Europe?
- Do our materials help learners understand why some past topics are still highly emotional and sensitive for some groups of people?
- Are our materials transnational, taking a multi-perspective approach and avoiding inappropriate Eurocentrism?
- Do our materials reflect up-to-date research and scholarship?
- Do the materials we produce start and end in the right place to understand people as fully human and to understand their perspectives, even if they are not white, rich, (northern/western) European, and male?



- Do the materials we produce support our assertion that history is an evidence-based, created, contested and selective interpretation of a very diverse past and that debating, rethinking and revisiting is what historians do?
- When learners use the materials, will they have learnt that:
  - c.50% of people in the past were women.
  - Black people and people of colour have lived in Europe since ancient times.
  - The story of black people and people of colour in Europe is not just one of people as victims of white oppression.
  - Jewish people and Roma, Sinti, and Traveller people have a long history in Europe that is not just one of suspicion and oppression.
  - People of different faiths and none have lived in Europe for many centuries.
  - There is a long history of people who might today identify as LGBTQIA+.
  - Disabled people were part of, and disability history is written about, every period of the past.
  - Women were not all white, not all black people were men, and so on... that is, we are thinking about intersectionality.
  - People were more rounded and complex than the labels people in power/society gave them - they do not just appear in our materials to be 'done unto' by people in power.
  - The diverse past helps to understand the diverse present.
  - History can be studied at different levels - local to global.
  - People and events are never separate from the environment, Humans are shaped by and shape their environment, both positively and negatively.

## Methodology and Pedagogies Quality Indicators

→ Instructions for educators

- Does the educational material have clear instructions that are easy to follow and understand by anyone? For example, you don't need to read a sentence or paragraph twice to wrap your head around it.
- Is the educational material comprehensive, leaving little to no questions unanswered? For example, the material explains where to look up answers to related questions that might pop up during discussion.
- Is the educational activity realistic?
- Can the activities be carried out in the specified amount of time?
- Does the activity include accessible resources?
- Does the activity relate to the general outcomes of the materials?
- Is it clear what materials and infrastructure are needed to conduct the activity (i.e. A4 papers, a projector, or any digital tools)?
- Is there a clear differentiation between instructions and materials for educators and learners?
- Is there a clear difference between the learners' preparatory materials and those used in class? For example, a group activity about playing a card game includes a separate sheet with rules for each group.

→ Expected Outcomes and Learning Objectives

- Is it clear what learners can achieve by participating in the activity (i.e. the competences, skills and values that can be developed are clearly stated)?
- Are the educational outcomes easy to measure?
- Are the educational outcomes relevant to the activity to be implemented?

→ Assessment of the activities

- Is the assessment realistic with the learning outcomes identified?
- Is the assessment realistic with the activities developed?
- Are the assessment instructions clear (i.e. an assessment rubric is included on how to measure the skills to be developed)?

→ General Aspects of the Activities

- Are the educational materials invitational and empowering for both educators and learners?
- Are the activities fun?
- Does the activity give agency to the learners on the learning process (i.e. they can make some decisions on the content or approach to be taken)?
- Can learners with different learning needs use the activity?
- Are the educational materials accessible for educators unfamiliar with the approach?
- Is there enough information so educators can apply the activity regardless of their previous knowledge?