

mPPACT manifest

methodology for a Pupil and Performing Arts-Centred Teaching

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This publication has been prepared with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union Education (Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency) in the framework of the Comenius 2.1 action 129368-CP-1-2006-1-UK-COMENIUS-C21 (mPPACT).



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

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ISBN 978-07552-0487-8

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FOREWORD

The purpose of this book is to describe the journey taken by the mPPACT partnership in creating the methodology as well as to describe the course that has been its destination, and to introduce the reader to the theoretical foundations of mPPACT. In addition, it is there to set the contemporary scene against which we have applied ourselves to address the Comenius thematic area of: **the new role of the teacher** in our changing world.

The initial idea was that this should be a handbook for course participants. And that it is. Participants in future mPPACT courses will have access to this book to supplement, perhaps contextualise and concretise other reading recommended by the trainers. There will always be other reading because the field is not static. In addition to the fundamental theorists whose work is by its nature now 'fixed' and unchanging, there will be a moving flow of new material as the discourse continues and the mPPACT methodology continues to evolve. Our website at www.mPPACT.eu will hold most of this material as well as housing our own ongoing debates and blogged pointers towards emerging material or discourses elsewhere that may have a bearing on the theme of '*the new role of the teacher*'.

The handbook – manifest – is not a manual: It did not take long to agree that a 'manual' to instruct a participant-user in the mPPACT process would be both impossible and inappropriate. mPPACT is an ongoing method, constantly evolving and not based on a linear progression of steps and exercises. It depends on creativity and imagination of both teacher and learner. As such, a cookery book of specific ingredients would not work.

But why should the book be aimed so specifically at actual course participants? There is a host of teachers, educationalists, youth workers and

otherwise interested parties that may have come across the mPPACT idea and wish to explore it further. There is the website and there should be a book as a further concrete outcome of the project, a dissemination of its ideas – that is the mPPACT manifest.

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Union is responsible for the management of certain parts of the EU's programmes in the fields of education, culture and audiovisual.¹

The Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) is the successor to the Socrates, Leonardo and ICT/Open and Distance Learning programmes of 2000–2006. It supports learning opportunities from childhood to old age in every single life situation through different programmes, including **Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig, Jean Monnet**.

At the time of writing, as we shift from running the course within the four phases of the preparatory programme, under the auspices of the LLP, the course has trained 55 teachers in four countries, thereby reaching some 450 pupils and young people across Europe. Where the word pupil is used in the book, this refers to school-goers of all ages. The first independent course will run in Greece, where it all began, in November of 2009.

In the future, the mPPACT course will run, with international participants, at least once per year in a range of EU country locations. It is open to teachers, educators, youth workers from all the EU countries.

As an LLP outcome, mPPACT has the status of a validated EU Course and appears in the Comenius/Grundtvig data base:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/llp/istcoursedatabase>

LLP National Agencies in each EU country offer funds for those eligible.

The partner team:

We have eight partner institutions, in four countries.

University of Winchester (UK)

Alex Mavrocordatos (co-ordinator)

Dave Pammenter

Aspire Trust (UK)

Alan Thompson

Dr. Nick Owen

Hellenic Theatre/Drama & Education Network (TENet-Gr)

Betty Giannouli

¹ http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about/programmes_2000_2006_en.php

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Fotini Dimitriou
VIA University College (Denmark)
Karsten Petersen
Jens Sorensen
Arne Tannebeek
Performers House (Denmark)
Lars Illum

In addition, Dr Smaragda Chrysostomou (University of Athens) has been with us throughout as ‘critical friend’ and co-ordinator of the internal monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

(Please note that, in accordance with data protection, the photographs have been selected so as to avoid showing young children. Consequently, most of the pictures in the book are from the training courses and the mPPACT events, rather than from teachers’ work in the classrooms.)

Fuller details of the mPPACT partnership team are to be found in the appendix.

But these are not all who contributed to the progression of mPPACT from a warmly debated idea to the vibrant course that it is today.

I should like to thank Jorn Bjerre and Asterios Tsiaras, who attended the first defining partners’ seminar in Nafplion Greece in the winter of 2006, but were unable to continue with the project. Also, Christina Zoniou, whose maternity leave prevented her from consolidating her role in the team.

Special thanks go to Beata Znoj and Marion Van Hille, from the Comenius head-quarters in Brussels, for their prompt and personable responses to our queries, whether by phone or email.

Thanks to Joanne Rowe, whose tireless work as the mPPACT administrator ensured the smooth running of the project, and to all the local administrators of each partner institution, who lubricated our administrative wheels. Thanks to George Howard, without whose support back in 2006 putting the original budget together, we would not have had a project at all.

Thanks to Mario Coelho for his patience while designing the revised double-helix spiral learning diagram. Thanks also to Anna Tschli for being there on the end of the Skype message-line all through the final deadline days (and nights) of this book's preparation.

The Structure of the book and some meta-data:

The book is constructed in three parts.

Part one: The main body of the book is collectively written by the writing team. It describes mPPACT's history, context, theoretical position and it offers a description of the course. (The team: Alex Mavrocordatos (editor), Dave Pammenter, Betty Giannouli, Nikos Govas and Smaragda Chrysostomou.)

Part two: consists of supporting essays by other members of the mPPACT team. (These are Fotini Dimitriou, Dr. Natassa Economidou-Stavrou, Dr. Nick Owen, Dr. Anna Tschli.)

Part three: seeks to give an impression of the kind of activities that mPPACT involves in describing some of the key activities. (Edited by Nikos Govas.)

The appendices offer details of the partners and their institutions, a bibliography mostly of works referred to in the text and an index of some keywords.

Alex Mavrocordatos
September 2009