

## Testimonial for Laura Gorghiu January 2020

My name is Andrew Bullough I am a Senior Research Fellow based at Sheffield Institute of Education part of Sheffield Hallam University in England.

Between 2015 and 2018 I had the pleasure of working with Laura Gorghiu and colleagues of Valahia University Targoviste. We collaborated together on the development and delivery of the £2.6M Euro EU funded Engage project. Sheffield Hallam were the lead organisation for the project working across fourteen partner organisations including VUT. My role was that of overall project co-ordinator.

During our time together on Engage we developed a strong link with Laura and the VUT team, built on trust and mutual understanding. This partnership was valued by us. Laura was a most proactive partner in driving our project forwards. This was also noted by our independent external evaluator Dr Stella Mascarenas Keyes who commented on the successes of Laura and the VUT team, I have taken this excerpt directly from her final evaluation report to share with you.

*In Romania the partner and other colleagues at the university (VUT) have a strong pre-existing relationship with policy officials and professional teacher associations. The views of the partner are respected, and they were involved in frequent bilateral and multi-lateral meetings concerning teacher education. As teacher education is very tightly controlled in Romania with teachers having to undertake nationally accredited training to both obtain and maintain their teacher status, the fact that the partner has a seat at the table, both county and national, and is able to draw on its experience of delivering Engage, is an excellent achievement for the project.*

During the course of our time working together Laura lead her colleagues and partners in helping to develop the website architecture closely working with both the Open University and ourselves in the UK and eXact Learning Solutions (ELS) a small medium enterprise web development team based in Italy.

At the end of the project and following the introduction of GDPR across Europe VUT offered to host the web domain name beyond Brexit as in the UK we can no longer host such an EU domain name. Laura's proactive solution focused approach to making our project work is something that I value.

In June 2016 as a trusted partner Laura and team lead and hosted a key project development meeting for all partners in Sinaia. This meeting was about planning for the implementation of the Transform Phase (Work Package 6) whilst also reflecting upon aspects of legacy and evaluation progress (Work Package 7 / Work Package 8). Laura combined skills to make the meeting not only a highly professional success but also exhibited great hospitality to make for a highly enjoyable meeting. I feel lucky to have worked with Laura and consider her as a most reliable friend.



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