European University Alliance

# D3.4. – Multiple Learning Materials for Staff Development Programmes

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**1. ARQUS COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE: INTRODUCTION 3**

**2. MULTIPLE LEARNING MATERIALS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: INTRODUCTION 4**

**3. MULTIPLE LEARNING MATERIALS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: BRIEF DESCRIPTION 6**

3.1. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: ARQUS INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON ROMANCE STUDIES (hereinafter AIFRS) 6

3.1.1 Title of the LM 1: Review of Key Events 6

3.1.2 Title of the LM 2: Bottom Up Initiative. Beyond majority languages: research dissemination and teaching promotion of minority and minoritized languages in Europe 6

3.1.3. Title of the LM 3.: A Proto-Community of Practice in Arqus 7

3.2. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: RESEARCH SUPPORT OFFICERS 7

3.2.1. Title of the LM 1.: AI Bootcamp for Researchers & Research Manager (resources available upon request) 7

3.3. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: ARQUS CULTURAL COMMUNITIES NETWORK 8

3.3.1. Title of the LM 1.: Review of Key Events 8

3.3.2. Title of the LM 2.: Missions of Culture Centers 9

3.4. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR DISCRIMINATION, (SEXUAL) HARRASSMENT AND MOBBING PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT AT UNIVERSITIES 9

3.4.1. Title of the LM 1.: Systems preventing and resolving cases of discrimination, harassment and violence in academia 9

3.5. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: PROJECT FINANCE MANAGEMENT OFFICES 10

3.5.1. Title of the LM: Horizon implementation guidance 10

3.6. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE EXCHANGE NETWORK ON URBAN STUDIES 10

3.6.1. Title of LM: Good practice exchange sessions 10

3.7. OPEN SCIENCE NETWORK & GREEN COMPUTING GROUP 11

3.7.1 Title of the LM 1.: Open Source Software and Open Licenses – A practical approach 11

3.8. OPEN SCIENCE NETWORK & GREEN COMPUTING GROUP 12

3.8.1 Title of the LM 2.: Behind the Code: The Dark Footprint of Artificial Intelligence 12

3.9 COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: AI AND LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING 13

3.9.1 Title of the LM 1: Survey on AI usage by students 13

3.9.2. Title of LM 2: List of articles regarding AI usages in the language classroom 14

**4. CONCLUSIONS 14**

## 1. ARQUS COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE: INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest challenges faced by European University Alliances is that of community- and identity-building within and across our member universities. Despite the initial difficulties imposed by the pandemic, we have been able to establish concentric, intersecting and interlinked networks of members of each of our universities, building a sense of on-line community and Arqus identity. In order to move forward in our step-by-step approach to building a truly European University, Arqus believes that the many existing formal and informal Task Forces, Working Groups, committees and other groupings constitute the basis for our joint institutional learning and transformational approach. This Working Group aims to offer an upscaled and institutionalized framework for Arqus Communities not only in those areas already identified as key to the building of our shared future, but also in emerging areas for cooperation. The concept of Communities of Practice, borrowed from learning theory, is that of "systems of collective critical inquiry and reflection focused on building a shared identity and collective intelligence garnered over time" (NussbaumBeach and Hall, 2012); it fits perfectly with Arqus' self-conception as a "laboratory for institutional learning", but grounds specific activities in their respective domains, thus weaving the social fabric required to enable collective learning. These Communities of Practice also constitute a key framework for the rapid and smooth incorporation of the Alliance's new members, facilitating institution-wide engagement on their part. Arqus offers each Community a collaborative space on the Arqus Learning Management System (LMS), other IT solutions for virtual meetings and events, together with logistic support when needed from the core Arqus team.

## 2. MULTIPLE LEARNING MATERIALS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: INTRODUCTION

Arqus Communities of Practice (CoPs) have emerged as dynamic spaces for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and institutional development. One of their most valuable contributions has been the creation and usage of diverse learning materials that directly support their staff development programmes across member universities. These materials, gathered from multiple CoPs and thematic areas, reflect the shared expertise, experiences, and innovations taking place within the network.

These learning materials are practical resources grounded in real institutional contexts. They take many forms: policy documents, presentations, case studies, digital content, training toolkits, and curated reference collections. Learning materials educate, provide knowledge and skills, help members learn and grow. Materials have been developed through collaborative activities such as workshops, bootcamps, seminars, and strategic initiatives carried out by Arqus CoPs. As it was recognised within Arqus CoPs, they typically share knowledge and develop professionally in three main ways:

- Mutual exchange: They meet, discuss articles, share new insights, and learn from each other through regular interactions and visits.

- Collaborative activities: They use their shared experiences and skills to organise summer schools, workshops, and other events for students and peers.
- External expertise: They engage external experts or companies to provide training and upskilling, often funded through university resources or Arqus bottom-up initiatives.

Within these three approaches, Arqus CoPs learn, grow, and also produce and use learning materials. Learning materials serve to educate, transfer knowledge and skills, and support members' development. Based on this understanding, and reflecting the typical ways in which CoPs operate and grow – also through using external training for mutual learning – some materials presented within this document were created by CoPs themselves but also some were created by external companies and experts and used by CoPs to enhance their mutual learning process.

The value of all materials lies in their applicability. They offer hands-on support for those involved in research management, diversity and inclusion, cultural engagement, open science, project finance, and language education. At the same time, they help institutions navigate evolving priorities - from the responsible use of AI to the promotion of minority languages and the prevention of harassment in academia.

By integrating these materials into staff development programmes, CoPs and institutions foster peer learning, enhance professional skills, and ensure that staff remain aligned with best practices and European policy frameworks.

Together, these learning resources illustrate empowering staff and institutions through shared knowledge, mutual learning, and a commitment to innovation. The following document offers a glimpse into that work – documenting what CoPs have done, what they've learned, and how they continue to shape their future. The selected learning materials lead to transformative outcomes and use innovative methodologies with the aim of creating meaningful synergies with the other institutions within the Alliance.

Learning materials developed and used by the following CoPs are presented in this document:

1. Arqus International Forum on Romance Studies
2. Research Support Officers
3. Arqus Cultural Communities' Network
4. Community of Practice for Discrimination, (Sexual) Harassment and Mobbing Prevention and Management at Universities
5. Project Finance Management Offices
6. Exchange Network on Urban Studies
7. Open Science Ambassador Network
8. AI and Language Learning and Teaching

It is also worth noticing that this deliverable was originally due in M24 and it was officially postponed to M33 due to several reasons. The request for postponement stems from the need to ensure sufficient time to develop high-quality, relevant learning materials aligned

with the Alliance's goals. Communities of Practice (CoPs) vary in maturity, focus, and engagement, making uniform progress difficult. Challenges include lack of funding, time constraints, motivational issues, and differing needs across CoPs. Most interactions have been virtual due to limited resources, slowing down content creation. An in-person meeting in April 2024 helped identify these issues and reinforce collaboration.

### Access to the Learning Materials

Some of these learning resources will be publicly available through the Arqus website or in open repositories, while others will be accessible on the Arqus Learning Management System. A third category may only be available internally in Arqus upon request, due to their sensitive nature, licensing constraints or the need for contributor consent.

At the moment of submitting this deliverable (June 2025) several issues related to licensing and authorship as well as technical adaptation to digital platforms need to be clarified for a number of these learning materials. Therefore, in most cases this deliverable does not contain links giving access to them, but an updated version of this deliverable will be available by the end of Arqus II detailing access policies for each material and including links to all openly accessible learning materials. However, interested Arqus staff or CoP members may already request access for internal use, training, or peer learning purposes. The project coordinators are happy to provide guidance or selected content where feasible for internal use.

## 3. MULTIPLE LEARNING MATERIALS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: BRIEF DESCRIPTION

### 3.1. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: ARQUS INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON ROMANCE STUDIES (HEREINAFTER AIFRS)

#### 3.1.1 TITLE OF THE LM 1: REVIEW OF KEY EVENTS

This digital learning material takes the form of a dedicated website section that presents a comprehensive *Key Events Description* organized by the Arqus International Forum on Romance Studies (AIFRS). As one of the most active and interdisciplinary Communities of Practice within the Arqus Alliance, AIFRS has cultivated a vibrant academic space for collaboration, exchange, and innovation across the Romance-language-speaking academic world. The events reviewed on the website showcase a wide range of scholarly and pedagogical activities, including:

- International conferences and symposia
- Public lectures and roundtable discussions
- Summer and winter schools
- Multilingual teaching initiatives

- Cross-institutional research collaborations

Each event serves as a valuable record of community-driven learning and engagement, offering insights into the methods, themes, and practices that define the AIFRS's contribution to open, multilingual, and inclusive academic cooperation.

Visit the website for more: https://arqus-alliance.eu/our-communities/aifrs/aifrs-events/

### 3.1.2 Title of the LM 2: Bottom Up Initiative. Beyond majority languages: research dissemination and teaching promotion of minority and minoritized languages in Europe

The learning materials are based on the project proposal and work plan submitted under the **Arqus Bottom-Up Initiative Call**, a funding scheme designed to incentivize innovative, staff- and student-led activities within the Arqus Alliance. **"Beyond Majority Languages"** addresses the urgent and often overlooked issue of how minority and minoritized languages are represented – and frequently underrepresented – in both research dissemination and academic teaching. The project foregrounds the importance of inclusivity in linguistic scholarship and practice across European universities and aims to promote multilingual awareness as a core value in higher education. The resources within the project served both as a strategic framework for those interested in launching similar initiatives and as a reflection tool on how to engage academic communities around linguistic diversity.

### 3.1.3. Title of the LM 3.: A Proto-Community of Practice in Arqus

The presentation was developed by the Arqus International Forum on Romance Studies as a reflective and instructive learning resource aimed at supporting other emerging or developing Communities of Practice (CoPs) within the Arqus Alliance. Titled *"A Proto-Community of Practice in Arqus"*, the material serves as both a documentation of experience and a guide for others. It traces the journey of establishing a new CoP, capturing the initial motivations, collaborative steps taken, and the real-world challenges encountered in building a functional and meaningful academic community across institutional and national boundaries.

Rather than offering a rigid blueprint, the presentation shares lived experiences, lessons learned, and practical advice grounded in the Forum's own development process. It aims to inspire, support, and guide other Arqus CoPs at various stages of their formation or growth. The presentation is valuable not only as a story of one CoP's development but also as a conversation starter and tool for peer learning within the broader Arqus community.

## 3.2. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: RESEARCH SUPPORT OFFICERS

### 3.2.1. TITLE OF THE LM 1.: AI BOOTCAMP FOR RESEARCHERS & RESEARCH MANAGER (RESOURCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST)

The AI Bootcamp for Researchers & Research Managers was organized by the research support officers of the Open Science Ambassadors Network – Community of Practice (CoP). Held as an intensive, hands-on learning experience, the bootcamp was designed to help participants explore the practical application of generative AI tools in academic research and research management—especially in the context of developing competitive grant proposals.

The workshop addressed key challenges currently faced by researchers and support staff, including how to choose and use AI tools effectively, how to write and edit grant proposals using generative AI, and how to navigate evolving policies and ethical considerations surrounding AI in research. The bootcamp featured a series of structured, practice-based learning modules, each addressing specific pain points commonly experienced in research workflows. These included:

- Introduction to generative AI and its role in research
- Identifying relevant funding opportunities using AI-assisted tools
- Crafting effective prompts for writing support
- Using AI tools for structured proposal writing (Excellence, Impact, Implementation)
- Understanding policy requirements from funders and the European Commission
- Ensuring responsible AI use, research integrity, and data privacy

Participants engaged with a curated set of digital tools (e.g., ChatGPT, SciWriter.AI, Scientify, Impacter, R Discovery, Jenni), and practiced real-world tasks such as searching for grants, writing proposals, and evaluating their own outputs using AI-enhanced workflows.

## 3.3. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: ARQUS CULTURAL COMMUNITIES NETWORK

### 3.3.1. TITLE OF THE LM 1.: REVIEW OF KEY EVENTS

This digital learning material takes the form of a dedicated website sections that presents an overview of key cultural events organized by the Arqus Cultural Communities Network. As a dynamic and collaborative Community of Practice within the Arqus Alliance, ACCN aims to bring together cultural actors from across the partner universities into a long-term, sustainable network. The CoP focuses on strengthening inter-institutional cooperation and fostering a shared space for artistic exchange, dialogue, and innovation.
The reviewed events reflect a broad spectrum of cultural and creative activities, including:

- International festivals, exhibitions, and artistic showcases,
- Public dialogues, cultural workshops, and performances,
- Community-building activities centred on diversity and inclusion,
- Knowledge exchange between university cultural centres,
- Collaborative projects highlighting local heritage and global culture.

Each event serves as a record of community-driven cultural engagement and informal learning, offering insights into the themes, approaches, and practices that define the CoP's commitment to intercultural dialogue, creativity, and shared European values.

The Arqus Cultural Communities Network was established to get acquainted with the cultural, artistic, and heritage-based initiatives taking place at each partner university, to exchange good practices, and to support the joint development and implementation of international cultural initiatives. By fostering a strong network of partners, this CoP adds a new dimension—Culture—into the core of Arqus Alliance cooperation and contributes to embedding cultural vitality in the Alliance's broader academic agenda.

This review of key events offers inspiration and guidance for other CoPs or institutions seeking to integrate culture more fully into transnational collaboration.

Visit the website for more*:*

- https://www.kultura.vu.lt/en/news/2201-arqus-alliance-cultural-community-network
- https://www.kultura.vu.lt/en/news/2086-vilnius-university-and-university-of-lyon-1-join-forces-to-promote-culture-internationally

### 3.3.2. Title of the LM 2.: Missions of Culture Centers

The learning material presents a concise and insightful overview of the mission, roles, and impact of cultural centres within Arqus Alliance universities. Developed by the Arqus Cultural Communities Network, the material highlights how culture centres function as bridges between academia and society—supporting intercultural dialogue, inclusion, artistic expression, and community engagement. It serves as a foundational resource for:

- Understanding the diverse approaches to cultural programming across Arqus institutions,
- Identifying opportunities for collaboration and joint cultural initiatives,
- Inspiring new CoPs or university units to integrate cultural dimensions into their work.

This material is especially useful for cultural managers, international officers, CoP coordinators, and educators looking to strengthen the role of culture in higher education settings.

## 3.4. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR DISCRIMINATION, (SEXUAL) HARASSMENT AND MOBBING PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT AT UNIVERSITIES

### 3.4.1. TITLE OF THE LM 1.: SYSTEMS PREVENTING AND RESOLVING CASES OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE IN ACADEMIA

This set of learning materials, developed by the Community of Practice focused on preventing and managing discrimination, (sexual) harassment, and mobbing at universities, brings together institutional strategies, action plans, and working models from several Arqus partner universities. These documents collectively serve as a valuable comparative resource and practical guide for universities aiming to strengthen their internal frameworks in the area of inclusion, safety, and equal treatment. The learning material was created as a combination of the presentations of different universities of their efforts and systems preventing and resolving cases of discrimination, harassment and violence in academia. The LM can further serve as a mean to share the different tactics and common strategies of discrimination prevention.

## 3.5. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: PROJECT FINANCE MANAGEMENT OFFICES

### 3.5.1. TITLE OF THE LM: HORIZON IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

The material presented by this community of practice includes the European Commission's guidelines and instructions on managing Horizon Europe and Horizon 2020* project funding. It covers financial management from project initiation to completion, including grant agreement amendments, financial reporting, audits, and final report and justification. It also provides templates to unify methodology and improve management so that all members of the community of practice are on the same page and have the same way of working.

*The materials mainly refer to Horizon 2020 as most of the CoP members' audit experience is still primarily linked to this programme. Some members are still managing ongoing H2020 projects. Additionally, the Grant Agreement for Horizon Europe was finalized only around 2024, and to date, the CoP has not been involved in any audits under Horizon Europe.

## 3.6. COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE EXCHANGE NETWORK ON URBAN STUDIES

### 3.6.1. TITLE OF LM: GOOD PRACTICE EXCHANGE SESSIONS

The Community of Practice (CoP) on Urban Studies within the Arqus Alliance brings together scholars from diverse institutional and disciplinary backgrounds. United by shared pedagogical and epistemological concerns, the CoP aims to foster collaborative

teaching practices that reflect the complexity of urban phenomena across different socio-spatial and political-economic contexts.

The presented set of learning materials emerged from a series of Good Practice Exchange Sessions, which serve as a platform for critical reflection and pedagogical innovation. These resources document and disseminate methodologies that integrate research-led teaching, interdisciplinarity, and student engagement. The following set of learning materials derives from five Good Practice Exchange Sessions and constitutes an evolving knowledge base for urban studies pedagogy. These materials are educationally valuable for several reasons:

1. Collaborative Context Mapping: The first session provides a visual and conceptual overview of members' research and teaching environments, enabling mutual learning and facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration across the network.
2. Digital Storytelling for Research Dissemination: The second session introduces Instorier, a digital narrative tool that fosters multimodal learning and supports students in translating empirical research into visually engaging formats—enhancing both communication skills and reflexive analysis.
3. Critical Urban Research in Practice: The third session focuses on short-term rentals (STRs) as an emergent urban issue. By sharing methodological insights and data platforms, the session models how to incorporate real-time data and urban trends into teaching in a research-informed way.
4. Controversy Mapping as a Pedagogical Method: The fourth session explores a methodological framework—Controversy Mapping—that trains students to analyze complex urban disputes through actor-network theory and digital methods. This expands analytical capacity and encourages systems thinking.
5. Image-Based Comparative Urban Analysis: The fifth session proposes an innovative, language-independent exercise modeled on the GeoGuessr game. It promotes observational skills, comparative thinking, and engagement with everyday urban textures—fostering both critical visual literacy and cross-cultural understanding.

Together, these resources exemplify how urban research can be transformed into interactive, reflective, and transferable learning tools. The CoP employs them in curriculum co-design, student engagement strategies, and transnational pedagogical collaborations, contributing to its long-term goal: the development of integrated, research-oriented teaching modules within a European framework for urban studies.

## 3.7. OPEN SCIENCE NETWORK & GREEN COMPUTING GROUP

### 3.7.1 TITLE OF THE LM 1.: OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE AND OPEN LICENSES – A PRACTICAL APPROACH

The learning material, titled "Open Source Software and Open Licenses – A Practical Approach", was developed to support researchers, educators, and students in understanding and applying open source tools and open licensing principles in their

academic and professional work. Open source and open licensing are key pillars of open science, yet they are often surrounded by confusion or uncertainty, especially when it comes to practical implementation. The presentation addresses that gap by offering a hands-on, accessible approach to these topics, combining theoretical background with practical guidance, examples, and use cases.

As a learning resource, it serves multiple purposes: it introduces foundational concepts, supports critical reflection on licensing decisions, and empowers users to make informed choices when creating, using, or sharing software and other digital outputs. The Community of Practice actively uses this material in various formats—through peer-to-peer training sessions, workshops, and public outreach events—helping to share understanding of open science practices across institutions. By using and continuously refining these resources, the community aims to strengthen openness, collaboration, and reproducibility in research and education.

## 3.8. OPEN SCIENCE NETWORK & GREEN COMPUTING GROUP

### 3.8.1 Title of the LM 2.: Behind the Code: The Dark Footprint of Artificial Intelligence

This educational resource offers a comprehensive, data-driven, and critically engaged exploration of the environmental costs of artificial intelligence (AI)—a topic that remains largely underrepresented in mainstream technological discourse. Designed by members of the Green Computing Group and the Open Science Ambassadors Communities of Practice within the ARQUS Alliance, the material stands at the intersection of technological innovation, environmental sustainability, and open science ethics.

Drawing from a wide range of academic sources, industry reports, and real-world metrics, the presentation maps the full life-cycle footprint of AI infrastructures, offering learners a nuanced understanding of how the digital systems powering AI models—from data centers to smartphones—are embedded in a high-impact web of material, energetic, and environmental dependencies.

Specifically, the resource provides:

- A critical introduction to the environmental challenges posed by AI, situating its development within the broader planetary context of energy crisis, resource scarcity, and climate change.
- A breakdown of energy and carbon costs associated with training and deploying large-scale AI models (e.g., ChatGPT, GPT-3), offering detailed comparisons with conventional digital tools like search engines.

- In-depth coverage of water consumption linked to data center cooling and semiconductor manufacturing, revealing the “invisible thirst” of AI that affects global water stress, particularly in regions already facing scarcity.
- Analysis of the impact of digital hardware and electronic waste, from the carbon cost of producing smartphones and GPUs to the consequences of software-driven obsolescence and the global e-waste crisis.
- Evidence-based discussions on the key drivers behind the exponential growth in AI’s computational and ecological demand, including architectural complexity, model scale, and usage intensity (e.g., billions of daily inferences).

A survey of cutting-edge strategies for reducing AI’s environmental impact, such as:

- Green software engineering principles.
- Energy-aware programming language choices.
- Operational best practices like autoscaling, rightsizing, and workload scheduling.
- Carbon-aware computing, which adapts software behaviour to the carbon intensity of the energy grid.

Importantly, this resource doesn’t stop at diagnosis. It empowers learners, developers, researchers, and institutions to act on this knowledge by integrating sustainability goals into the research lifecycle. Through tools like the Green Software Maturity Matrix, and the promotion of reproducible, transparent workflows, it aligns with open science principles to avoid redundant model training, facilitate resource sharing, and minimize environmental duplication. Furthermore, the material explicitly connects environmental impacts with ethical and social justice concerns. In short, this resource equips ARQUS Communities of Practice with both the analytical lens and actionable frameworks to foster a new paradigm of "Green AI"—one where digital innovation is pursued in harmony with planetary boundaries, human equity, and responsible research principles. The presentation addresses the environmental impact of AI, offering policy recommendations and sustainable practices for institutional research. It highlights how open science—like sharing pre-trained models—can reduce redundant computation and environmental harm. Key outcomes include raising awareness of AI’s ecological costs, promoting efficient coding and green infrastructure, and linking sustainability with digital equity. The material influenced institutional practices and inspired replication across other ARQUS Communities of Practice. With a life-cycle view of AI and actionable tools like the Green Software Maturity Matrix, it supports evidence-based, interdisciplinary learning and fosters a culture of responsible, climate-aware research.

The presentation was developed in active collaboration with the Green Computing and Open Science CoPs to integrate open science principles into green computing practices, ensuring AI sustainability is addressed from design to deployment in academic research workflows.

## 3.9 COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: AI AND LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

### 3.9.1 TITLE OF THE LM 1: SURVEY ON AI USAGE BY STUDENTS

The Community of Practice: AI and Language Learning & Teaching seeks to build a clear, evidence-based picture of how students actually engage with artificial-intelligence tools while they study. Across the nine Arqus partner institutions – Granada, Graz, Leipzig, Lyon 1, Maynooth, Minho, Padua, Vilnius and Wrocław – students are already experimenting with generative text models, grammar-checkers, translators, coding companions and image generators. Yet reliable data on which tools they choose, how often they use them, and why they feel those tools help (or hinder) their learning is still scarce.

By asking about the frequency of use, the specific platforms employed, the study tasks supported, the perceived benefits and risks, and the institutional climate around AI (e.g. lecturers' attitudes and assessment experiences), the questionnaire lets us:

- map similarities and differences in AI practices across Arqus campuses;
- identify training needs and good practices that can feed directly into joint workshops, curricular guidelines and digital-literacy resources;
- monitor concerns about academic integrity and independent thinking so that we can design balanced, responsible-use policies.

AI and Language Learning & Teaching CoP deliberately framed the instrument as an open educational resource: completing it is not only data collection, but also a reflective learning activity. As students select answers and add short justifications, they are nudged to:

- take stock of their own digital-study habits;
- articulate benefits and drawbacks of AI support in language and content learning;
- consider the ethical and pedagogical dimensions of AI use that will later be discussed in CoP-led seminars and classrooms.

The survey is available in the resource bank, so that teachers across the Alliance can reuse or adapt it in research-methods courses, academic-writing modules or workshops on responsible AI. In this way the questionnaire functions simultaneously as a portable, scaffolded learning activity that cultivates critical digital literacy among Arqus students and a ready-to-use material for teachers generating the comparative insights to keep teaching and policy up to date.

### 3.9.2. TITLE OF LM 2: LIST OF ARTICLES REGARDING AI USAGES IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

CoP AI and Language Learning & Teaching brings together educators, researchers, and practitioners who share a commitment to exploring practices, sharing insights, and learning collaboratively.

In this material, we present a shared list of articles, each exploring a specific aspect of how AI is reshaping the field of language education. Topics include AI-powered tools for language teaching, ethical concerns in AI use, teacher roles in AI-integrated classrooms, and more. Each article offers insights, examples, and questions that are relevant to both theory and classroom application.

Community members are encouraged to read these articles not just individually, but as shared texts that form the basis for discussion, critical reflection, and collaborative exploration. The articles serve as common reference points during meetings, workshops, and online forums. By engaging with the material together, our community fosters a deeper understanding of how AI can be used thoughtfully and effectively in language education.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

In bringing together this diverse collection of learning materials, the Arqus Communities of Practice have demonstrated the tangible value of collaborative, bottom-up initiatives in shaping staff development. Each contribution – whether a resource for inclusive policy-making, a guide to responsible AI use, or an exploration of cultural exchange – represents a meaningful step toward more connected, informed, and innovative institutions.

As universities across Europe face evolving challenges and opportunities, these materials offer both inspiration and practical guidance. They reflect a shared commitment to peer learning, mutual support, and the ongoing professional growth of academic and administrative staff. While not all materials can be shared openly due to copyright or institutional restrictions, many are available upon request, preserving access while respecting the integrity and intent of the appropriate CoP. This balanced approach ensures that the knowledge generated within the Arqus Alliance continues to circulate meaningfully. Together, these resources show what is possible when communities are empowered to lead, share, and learn together. They are not only tools for staff development, but also building blocks of a stronger, more resilient, and more collaborative European university network.

As mentioned in point 2. of this document, a revised version of this deliverable containing details on access policy for each learning material and links to all openly accessible materials will be available by the end of the Arqus II funding period.

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