

## **What is the GELS network?**

The Global Engineers Language Skills (GELS) network is an informal group of Language and Communication (LC) teachers working at technical universities and engineering departments. We want to improve LC teaching and learning in our institutions by working together and with a clear and confident focus on the specific communication needs of engineers.

We LC teachers who work with budding engineers are often poorly placed to recognise our students' broader learning needs, because we seldom have a technical background ourselves and are rarely included in engineering faculty. However, LC training is vital for engineers, and we believe it can be integrated more effectively in engineering education if LC teachers have a clear picture of 1) what engineers really do and how they communicate, and 2) how these communication tasks can be a source of inspiration for meaningful teaching and learning activities in the LC classroom.

## **What are the aims of the GELS network?**

Firstly, we want to better prepare engineering students for international study and future employment by having a clear idea of engineers' specific language and communication needs (i.e. Language for Specific Purposes, LSP).

In addition, we want to provide opportunities for LC teachers working with engineers to network, share expertise and good practice, and ensure continued professional development.

## **Who is the GELS network?**

The GELS network began in 2015 with a meeting of Teresa Geslin, Jamie Rinder and David Tual: three experienced LC teachers working in France, Sweden and the UK respectively. We had a vision to make LC training better integrated in engineering curriculums and agreed on the importance for budding engineers to use a range of languages for academic and professional purposes – not just English.

The GELS network has grown every year since then: LC teachers from 27 institutions now belong to the network and work together to improve teaching and learning for engineers.

## **What has the GELS team achieved so far?**

### **Academic year 2015 – 2016: *From questionnaires to schemes for teaching and learning***

We surveyed engineers from diverse countries, companies and industries about their LC needs. With the results from these surveys, we created a progressive framework to act as a scheme of work for LC teachers. This framework is an adaptation of the Council of Europe's CEFR for Languages self-assessment grid and reflects the skills most often required by engineers.

We presented the GELS framework in three articles, all available at the GELS project's webpage, and at three international conferences. We also ran a training day at Cambridge University, UK for LC teachers from Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK.

**Academic year 2016 – 2017: *Disseminating the results***

We ran training days at Aalto University, Finland and Poznan University of Technology, Poland, and presented the GELS project at three international conferences in Norway, Czech Republic, and Slovenia. These events helped us to revise the GELS framework and develop the GELS network to include members from more institutions.

**Academic year 2017 – 2018: *Building the GELS network***

We ran a training week for LC teachers at KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden. Our focus was to engage with the GELS framework to create a basic catalogue of teaching and learning activities that complements each stage of the GELS framework. This catalogue should ultimately show LC teachers how they can better prepare students to engineer in an additional language.

**Academic year 2018 – 2019: *The BADGE project***

We ran a training week at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece, with English as Medium of Instruction (EMI) and Intercultural Communication as our main themes.

Under the coordination of Katja Auffret from Ecole des Mines d'Albi-Carmaux, France, 14 institutions in the GELS network created the BADGE project (Becoming a Digital Global Engineer) and successfully applied for Erasmus+ KA2 funding. This is a three-year project with the ultimate aim of inspiring language and communication education at engineering schools and departments. BADGE members will design teaching and learning materials for engineering students, and share these materials on an Open Educational Resources (OER) platform.