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Why Are Common Quality and Development Policies Needed?

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The EMI project is based on the collaboration of four major middleware projects in Europe, all already developing middleware products and having their pre-existing strategies for developing, releasing and controlling their software artefacts. In total, the EMI project is made up of about thirty development individual teams, called “Product Teams” in EMI. A Product Team is responsible for the entire lifecycle of specific products or small groups of tightly coupled products, including the development of test-suites to be peer reviewed within the overall certification process.

The Quality Assurance in EMI (European Middleware Initiative), as requested by the grid infrastructures and the EU funding agency, must support the teams in providing uniform releases and interoperable middleware distributions, with a common degree of verification and validation of the software and with metrics and objective criteria to compare product quality and evolution over time. In order to achieve these goals the QA team in EMI has defined and now it monitors the development work and release with a set of comprehensive policies covering all aspects of a software project such as packaging, configuration, documentation, certification, release management and testing.

This contribution will present with practical and useful examples the achievements, problems encountered and lessons learned in the definition, implementation and review of Quality Assurance and Development policies. It also describes how these policies have been implemented in the EMI project including the benefits and difficulties encountered by the developers in the project. The main value of this contribution is that all the policies explained are not depending on EMI or grid environments and can be used by any software project.

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