Online Learning Quality Evaluation Checklist

Introduction and acknowledgement:

This checklist has been developed as part of a collaborative project involving Cranfield University, De Montfort University, the University of the Highlands and Islands Millennium Institute (UHI) and the University of Salford. The Project Director is Dr Bernard Scott, Cranfield University. As is the nature of such things, the checklist draws on many sources, including an earlier version used by UHI, itself a collation drawing from a number of sources.

The checklist’s primary function is to be an aid in evaluating the quality of online courses. As such it can be used as part of both formal and informal evaluation procedures. Course developers themselves can use the checklist as a monitoring and reflection tool. The checklist is designed to be used with the On-Line Learning Knowledge Garden, a website with resources to support the course development process. There is a close mapping between the topics referred to in the checklist and the topics included in the Knowledge Garden. A course developer can use the checklist to identify gaps in knowledge and skills and then quickly access relevant support materials located in the Knowledge Garden.

The Online Learning Knowledge Garden is at http://olkg.cranfield.ac.uk/.

Course Developers

Please use the checklist to monitor and reflect upon your own practice. In addition would you please complete the final page giving your feedback on using this evaluation checklist, with any recommendations for improvements.

Evaluators

Please tick the relevant box for each criterion and complete the comments box at the end of each section. (The comments box is for you to give an overview of the module in relation to each of the sections or to highlight issues which you feel have not been dealt with using the evaluation checklist.) In addition would you please complete the final page giving your feedback on using this evaluation checklist, with any recommendations for improvements.

Please send a copy of your checklist feedback comments to:
Nigel Donald, Cranfield University, DCMT, Shrivenham, Swindon SN6 8LA
email: j.n.donald@cranfield.ac.uk
This checklist is divided into the following areas:

1. **Needs Analysis**
2. **Aims and Learning Outcomes**
3. **Course Structure**
   - Course ‘shell’
   - Signposts and navigation
     - Consistency
       - Where I am, where may I go
       - What is expected
     - Page layout, typography
     - Dialogue forms, navigation buttons
   - Flexible learning routes/adaptation
   - Bookmarking
   - Exits
4. **Course content**
   - Relevant for:
     - Course Aims
     - Learner’s contexts, interests
     - and personal goals
     - Personal and professional capabilities
     - Level
   - Accuracy
   - Up-to-date
   - Overall work load appropriate
   - Overall coherence and comprehensibility
   - Assimilable chunks for self-study
   - Study time clear and appropriate
   - Language/terminology/readability
   - Use of resources
   - Bibliography/references
   - Glossary of key terms
   - Copyright permissions
5. **Learning Design**
   - Using activities and formative assessment
     - Relevant
     - Timed
     - Interesting
     - Elaborate
     - Reinforce
     - Formative feedback
     - Self-assessment
   - Using different media
     - Explain, enrich, motivate
   - Using resources
     - Using collaborative learning
6. **Supporting Students and Tutors**
   - Induction,
   - Study guide
     - Tutor contact
       - Course content, structure, timetable and assessment
     - Example lesson with activities
     - How to study
   - IT requirements
   - IT skills prerequisites, self-assessment and support materials
   - Using a VLE
     - Using assessment tools
     - Using communication tools
     - Access to own records
     - Calendars, bulletin boards, discussion fora
   - Accessing helpdesk, IT support
   - Tutor/Instructor guides
   - Mentoring
   - Monitoring
7. **Assessment strategies**
   - Appropriate and fair
   - Type and criteria explained
   - How when and where
8. **For a Module Still Under Development**
   - Planning
   - Team work
9. **Implementation**
   - Accessibility
   - IT support, help systems
10. **Evaluation**

**Key for completing checklists**

- ✓ Meets criteria
- X Does not meet criteria
- NA Not Applicable
- DK Don’t know

Online Learning Quality Evaluation Checklist
1. Needs Analysis

Have you thought about the learners: √ or X, NA or DK

Context?

Interests?

Personal goals?

Does it meet the business case?

2. Aims and Learning Outcomes

Are the aims and learning outcomes clearly stated? √ or X, NA or DK

Please Comment On the Above
3. Course Structure

Does the course have? √ or X, NA or DK

- A clearly structured course ‘shell’
- Flexible learning route that allow for a learner’s preferences
- Flexible learning routes adapting to a learner’s progress
- Aids for bookmarking
- Clearly signalled exit procedures

Are access and navigation supported by?

- Clear and consistent signposting of:
  - Where I am, where I may go
  - What action or behaviour is expected?
- Clear and consistent use of:
  - Page layout and typography
  - Menus and dialogue forms
  - Navigation aids (buttons, maps etc.)?

Please Comment On the Above
4. Course Content

Is the course content? \(\sqrt{\text{or X, NA or DK}}\)

- Relevant for the Course Aims
- Relevant for learners’ contexts, interests and personal goals
- Addressing the students Personal and Professional Capabilities
- Aimed at the right level
- Accurate
- Up-to-date

Please Comment On the Above

Does the course content have? \(\sqrt{\text{or X, NA or DK}}\)

- An appropriate overall workload
- Overall coherence and comprehensibility
- Assimilable chunks for self-study
- Clearly specified and appropriate study times
- Appropriate use of terminology
- Text at an appropriate level of readability
- A good and relevant use of resources
- A bibliography of readings and/or list of references
- A glossary of key terms
- Copyright permissions clearly stated

Please Comment On the Above


### 5. Learning Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do units and lessons have a clear indication of learning outcomes?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do lessons use activities and formative assessment to support effective learning?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are activities?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Timed</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interesting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Elaborate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinforcing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accompanied by formative feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive of self-assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are different media used appropriately and effectively to?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrich</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivate</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Using resources</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there an effective and appropriate use of resources?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are they clearly referenced?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do links work with no problems?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using collaborative learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are discussion fora used effectively?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there clear instructions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is support adequate and appropriate?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Please Comment On the Above*
6. **Supporting students and Tutors**

**Students:** Are there effective induction procedures?  
Is there a Study Guide?  
Does the Study Guide contain information about?  
   - Tutor contact  
   - Course content  
   - Course structure  
   - Course calendar  
   - Course prerequisites  
   - Assessment requirements  
   - Award(s) to be gained  
   - Example lesson with activities  
   - How to study  
   - IT requirements  
   - IT skills prerequisites  
   - IT skills support materials  
   - Using a VLE  
   - Using assessment tools  
   - Using communication tools  
   - Access to own records  
   - Using calendars  
   - Using bulletin boards and discussion fora  
   - Accessing helpdesk and IT support  

**Please Comment On the Above**

**Tutors:** Are there effective induction procedures?  
Is there a tutor guide?  
Are there systems for mentoring?  
Are there systems for monitoring?  

**Please Comment On the Above**
8. **For a module still under development**  
√ or X, NA or DK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is there explicit planning?</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is team work a central feature?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Please Comment On the Above**


9. **Implementation**  
√ or X, NA or DK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have accessibility issues been addressed?</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are IT support and help systems available?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Please Comment On the Above**


10. **Evaluation**  
√ or X, NA or DK

| Does the module have an evaluation strategy? |   |

**Please Comment On the Above**


Please say how the Quality Evaluation Check List Could Be Improved

Please send a copy of your checklist feedback comments to:
Nigel Donald, Cranfield University, DCMT, Shrivenham, Swindon SN6 8LA
e-mail: j.n.donald@cranfield.ac.uk