

Online and blended course/module design checklist

(Adapted from the Quality Matters Rubrics)

Quality Matters (QM) is a national non-profit organization for quality assurance in online and blended course design. The QM online/blended course design rubric has been adopted as national standards. To learn more about QM and access more online design resources, visit: <https://www.qualitymatters.org/qa-resources/rubric-standards/higher-ed-rubric>

Faculty are encouraged to conduct a self-review or request peer review of their online/blended modules using this checklist.

8 general design standards

1. Course overview
2. Learning objectives (competencies)
3. Instructional materials
4. Learning activities
5. Learning technology
6. Assessment
7. Learner support
8. Accessibility and usability

Specific standards within each general standard

1. Course overview

- (1) Give clear instructions on how to get started and where to find various course components
Examples: A course “tour”; “Start here” button; a syllabus quiz
- (2) Introduce the purpose and structure of the course
- (3) Clearly state the online and face-to-face communication methods.
- (4) Clearly state the minimum technology requirements for the course
- (5) Clearly state the course and/or institutional policies (or provide a link to the policies).
- (6) Instructor and students make self-introductions (to create a sense of connection)

2. Learning objectives (competencies)

- (1) Provide course level learning objectives
- (2) Provide module/unit level learning objectives
- (3) Cover lower and higher level learning objectives whenever appropriate (note: Bloom’s taxonomy of learning objectives and action verbs).

3. Instructional materials

- (1) Use a variety of instructional materials

(2) Chunk content into smaller, more manageable segments

(3) Explain the distinction between required and optional materials

4. Learning activities

(1) Provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning

(2) Clearly state the requirements for student participation and interaction

5. Learning technology

(1) Use tools that promote active participation rather than passively absorbing information

(2) Use current tools

(3) Provide compatibility information

(4) Provide information on privacy policies (or links to the policies)

6. Assessment

(1) Use a variety of assessment approaches

(2) Provide frequent and substantive feedback to students

(3) Provide clear grading criteria/rubrics

(4) Clearly state grading policies

7. Learner support

(1) Provide technical support information

(2) Provide academic support/resources information

(3) Provide student service/resources information

(4) Articulate institution's accessibility policies

8. Accessibility and usability

(1) Design an interface that is visually appealing and easy to navigate

(3) Provide alternative means of access to non-text content