
E – LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE

THE FUTURE OF E-LEARNING IN LEBANON

NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY - LOUAIZE

MAY 28, 2015



OUTLINE

- **The Changing Landscape of Higher Education**
- **Learning vs. E-Learning**
- **Quality Assurance & Quality Enhancement**
- **E-Learning Quality Assurance: The Debate**
- **Elements of E-Learning Quality Assurance**
- **Good Practices**
- **General Remarks**
- **The Road Ahead**



THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE

- **Increasingly globalized world**
- **Higher education is now more open and accessible**
- **ICT enables efficient distribution of information**
- **Knowledge is a common good**
- **High cost of traditional higher education provision**
- **Role of education in reducing economic, geographic, and social barriers**
- **Reduced availability of time**
- **Etc.**



LEARNING VS. E-LEARNING

- **LEARNING:** “the activity or process of gaining knowledge or skill by studying, practicing, being taught, or experiencing something” (Merriam-Webster dictionary)
- **E-LEARNING:** learning that is facilitated and supported by a broad set of electronic applications and processes (The American Society for Training and Development ASTD)
- **BLENDED/HYBRID LEARNING:** learning that integrates “online with traditional face-to-face class activities in a planned, pedagogically valuable manner” (Sloan Consortium)

➔ **SUBSET OF LEARNING**



QUALITY ASSURANCE AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

- **QUALITY ASSURANCE:** “the means through which an institution ensures and confirms that the conditions are in place for students to achieve the standards set by it or by another awarding body” (British Quality Assurance Agency QAA 2004)
 - **QUALITY ENHANCEMENT:** “is seen as an aspect of institutional quality management that is designed to secure, in the context of the constraints within which individual institutions operate, steady, reliable and demonstrable improvements in the quality of learning opportunities” (British Quality Assurance Agency QAA 2006)
- ➔ **Determine that objectives have been achieved and make improvements (Continuous Checks and Improvements)**



E-LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

CONTENTIOUS ISSUE:

- “View 1: should be judged by the same criteria and methods as traditional education models
regardless of the use of technology, the basic principles of quality teaching and learning should apply
- View 2: e-learning is so different in its organization, enrolments and operations that conventional QA mechanisms cannot apply
the use of specific guidelines and standards for e-learning”

(Jung, 2012)



E-LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

SOME EXPERIENCES

- Norway (NOKUT, NADE...) and Sweden (NAHE...)
- UK (QAA, HEA, BAC, JISC...)
- Australia (ACODE...)

- USA (CHEA, DETC, DEAC...)
*i.e. the Council for Higher Education Accreditation
CHEA and the Distance Education and Training
Council DETC have established guidelines for the
assurance of quality in distance learning*



ELEMENTS OF E-LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE

MODEL 1:

ONLINE,
DISTANCE AND
BLENDED
LEARNING
ACCREDITATION
SCHEME
(BRITISH
ACCREDITATION
COUNCIL
BAC UK – 27
STANDARDS)

MODEL 2:

POLICIES,
PROCEDURES,
STANDARDS
AND GUIDE
(DISTANCE
EDUCATION
ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
DEAC USA – 12
STANDARDS)

MODEL 3:

GUIDELINES
FOR THE
EVALUATION
OF ON-LINE
LEARNING
(NEW
ENGLAND
ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOLS
AND COLLEGES
NEASC USA)



ELEMENTS OF E-LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE

<u>MODEL 1: BAC UK</u>	<u>MODEL 2: DEAC USA</u>
<p><u>Inspection Area 1</u> (4 standards) <i>Management, Staffing, and Administration</i></p>	<p><i>I. Institution Mission, Goals, and Objectives</i> <i>II. Educational Program Objectives, Curricula, and Materials</i></p>
<p><u>Inspection Area 2</u> (5 standards) <i>Teaching, Learning, and Achievement</i></p>	<p><i>III. Educational Services</i> <i>IV. Student Support Services</i> <i>V. Student Achievement and Satisfaction</i></p>
<p><u>Inspection Area 3</u> (4 standards) <i>Learner Support</i></p>	<p><i>VI. Qualifications and Duties of Owners, Governing Board Members, Officials, Administrators, Faculty, Staff, and Reputation of Institution</i></p>
<p><u>Inspection Area 4</u> (5 standards) <i>Management of Quality</i></p>	<p><i>VII. Admissions Practices and Enrolment Agreement</i> <i>VIII. Advertising, Promotional Literature, and Recruitment Personnel</i></p>
<p><u>Inspection Area 5</u> (9 standards) <i>Face-to-Face Component (if applicable)</i></p>	<p><i>IX. Financial Responsibilities</i> <i>X. Disclosures for Cancellations, Refunds and Discounts</i> <i>XI. Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, and Record Protection</i> <i>XII. Research and Self-Improvement</i></p>





ELEMENTS OF E-LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE

MODEL 3: NEASC USA (HYBRID MODEL – CONVENTIONAL STANDARDS + SPECIFIC GUIDELINES)

Standard I. Mission and Purpose:

Guidelines: *On-line learning is appropriate to the institution's mission and purpose*

Standard II. Planning and Evaluation:

Guidelines: *The institution's plans for developing, sustaining and, if appropriate, expanding on-line learning offerings are integrated into its regular planning and evaluation processes*

Standard III. Organization and Governance:

Guidelines: *On-line learning is incorporated into the institution's systems of governance and academic oversight*

Standard IV. The Academic Program:

Guidelines: *1) Curricula for the institution's on-line learning offerings are coherent, cohesive, and comparable in academic rigor to programs offered in traditional instructional formats; 2) The institution evaluates the effectiveness of its on-line learning offerings, including the extent to which the on-line learning goals are achieved, and uses the results of its evaluations to enhance the attainment of the goals*





ELEMENTS OF E-LEARNING QUALITY ASSURANCE

MODEL 3: NEASC USA (HYBRID MODEL – CONVENTIONAL STANDARDS + SPECIFIC GUIDELINES)

Standard V. Faculty:

Guidelines: *Faculty responsible for delivering the on-line learning curricula and evaluating the student's success in achieving the on-line learning goals are appropriately qualified and effectively supported*

Standard VI. Students:

Guidelines: *The institution provides effective student and academic services to support students enrolled in on-line learning offerings*

Standard VII. Library and Other Information Resources:

Standard VIII. Physical and Technological Resources:

Standard IX. Financial Resources:

Guidelines: *The institution provides sufficient resources to support and, if appropriate, expand its on-line learning offerings*

Standard X. Public Disclosure:

Standard XI. Integrity:

Guidelines: *The institution assures the integrity of its on-line offerings*



GOOD PRACTICES

- **E-Learning should relate and be consistent with the institution's mission**
- **Has clear objectives and measurable outcomes**
- **Supported by expert faculty, staff, technical infrastructure and information resources**
- **Designed and implemented by expert faculty and technicians**
- **Provides a worthy experience to learners**
- **Offers the same level of knowledge and intellectual development as the traditional systems**
- **Embeds elements of quality assurance and quality enhancement**



GENERAL REMARKS

- **“Tsunami of technologically-mediated instruction”**
- **Challenges for assuring educational quality**
- **Flexibility and Accountability: striking the right balance**
- **Specific requirements of on-line learning must be accounted for**
- **Different Context, Inputs, Processes and Academic Control requirements**



THE ROAD AHEAD

- **Learning from others' experiences**
- **Extending institutional internal mechanisms for quality assurance to e-learning**
- **Gradual introduction of e-learning programs (certificates, further education, support courses...)**
- **Governmental laws and regulation**



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