

Assuring the Quality of Your Course

Background

This checklist is a self-assessment guide to help you determine how well your course enhances student learning and engagement. It is based on research, as well as widely accepted university and government guidelines on quality requirements at the course level. Each item is not simply a binary choice, but rather an opportunity to think about the quality practices you engage in already and which areas of your practice you plan to improve.

How to use the checklist

Review each area, read the standard statement for each dimension of a quality course, and choose an answer. Consider ways to redesign those areas of practice where you have indicated ‘not sure’ or ‘no’.

Dimensions	Baseline Standard/ Minimum Requirement	Yes	Not sure	No
<i>Design</i>	1. The course learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable.			
	2. The course learning objectives take into account relevant USQ’s graduate skills.			
	3. The course learning objectives are aligned with the program’s objectives, including USQ graduate qualities.			
	4. The course learning objectives are addressed in the assessment tasks.			
	5. All the learning objectives of the modules/ topics/ units are aligned to the course learning objectives.			
	6. All learning objectives account for students’ prior learning.			
	7. All learning objectives are clearly stated and written from the students’ perspective.			
	8. The learning and teaching activities and extended resources designed support the learning objectives.			
	9. Chosen technology helps support course objectives and assists students to engage with course materials, the course examiner, and each other.			
	10. The course content is made available to students in manageable segments or ‘chunks’.			
	11. The course content is made accessible to students with different learning preferences by incorporating appropriate multimedia elements such as visual, text, audio and motion.			
	12. The course materials and activities include strategies to develop academic and graduate skills or attributes identified in course learning objectives.			
	13. Course materials and/or the course website are accessible to students from different learning contexts, including incarcerated students and those with a disability.			
	14. The time expended for the course (student workload) is within 165 hours.			
	15. The course materials, assessment and learning activities provide external students with equivalent requirements and a comparable experience to face-to-face, on-campus students.			
<i>Assessment</i>	1. Assessment is an integral part of course and program planning.			
	2. Assessment enables students to demonstrate forms of learning described in all course learning objectives.			

Dimensions	Baseline Standard/ Minimum Requirement	Yes	Not sure	No
	3. Assessment develops both disciplinary mastery and other desired forms of learning such as accreditation standards and graduate skills or attributes.			
	4. Assessment is criterion-referenced: it judges student performance against explicit, desirable, task-specific qualities or dimensions.			
	5. Expected student performance for assessment is appropriate, given students' prior learning in your discipline.			
	6. Examiner expectations about performance standards for specific assessment tasks are expressed to students through marking guidelines, rubrics, peer evaluation and teaching activities.			
	7. There is a moderation process for reaching consensus amongst all teaching team members about expected standards of student performance in assessment.			
	8. The first assessment item occurs early in the semester and is a manageable task designed to build students' skills, knowledge, motivation and confidence.			
	9. Assessment tasks target coherent, integrated forms of learning rather than disconnected fragments			
	10. Assessment engages students in authentic learning processes.			
	11. Assessment feedback provides specific information about how students can improve the quality of their work beyond their present standard of performance.			
	12. Feedback is provided in time for students to use it to improve their performance in subsequent tasks.			
	13. Assessment feedback processes are used to develop students' understanding of assessment norms and standards.			
	14. Assessment feedback processes enhance students' lifelong learning skills by developing their capacity reflect about how they learn, and/or to judge their own and others' performance.			
	15. Assessment tasks are designed to minimise barriers to learning for students with disability.			
<i>Use of technology and tools</i>	1. Technologies and tools currently used in students' chosen profession are used in the course.			
	2. Technologies and tools are used to facilitate access and interaction with course materials, the examiner and each other.			
	3. Technologies and tools are used to enhance learning experience e.g. use of simulations or visualisations to enhance knowledge.			
	4. Technologies are used to enhance each of the educational strategies discussed in this checklist e.g. improve the timeliness or detail of formative assessment feedback.			
	5. Students are provided with clear expectations, guides and ways to obtain assistance for their use of technologies and tools, eg. the StudyDesk checklist at http://snipurl.com/usqdigitaltools .			
<i>Feedback from students</i>	1. Feedback is sought progressively during the course (additional to formal, end-of-semester, summative University course evaluations).			
	2. Feedback is addressed.			
	3. Feedback that has been addressed is communicated explicitly with students; students are advised how feedback is used in the			

Dimensions	Baseline Standard/ Minimum Requirement	Yes	Not sure	No
	course, eg, in course materials or on USQ StudyDesk.			
	4. Feedback (including progressive feedback and formal, summative evaluation data) considered and incorporated within the Action Plan in the annual Course Quality Review.			
<i>Student support and resources</i>	1. Course contains information about being an online learner, such as statements of student responsibilities and expectations.			
	2. Course offers students to appropriate forms of learning support, such as Disability Support, the Learning Centre (which offers online and on campus guidance), the Library, and course-specific online support modules and resources			
	3. Course provides appropriate support to develop the academic skills required for the successful completion of course requirements, including assessment tasks.			
	4. Learning activities and course materials provide <i>scaffolded</i> support for students to acquire and/or develop the academic skills required for the successful completion of course requirements.			
<i>Student interaction and collaboration</i>	1. Course provides a safe, respectful, face-to-face and online environment for student-lecturer, student-student, and student-content interaction and collaboration.			
	2. Course provides clear rules and instructions about student-student, student-lecturer, and student-content interaction and collaboration.			
	3. Learning and teaching activities are designed to promote student-student interaction and collaboration, if appropriate to the course			
	4. Learning and teaching activities are designed to promote student-lecturer interaction and collaboration, if appropriate to the course.			
	5. Learning and teaching activities are designed to promote student-content interaction and collaboration, if appropriate to the course.			
	6. Course assessment incorporates, where appropriate, opportunities for student-student, student-content, and student-lecturer interaction and collaboration.			
	7. Course assessment allows for elements of student choice and collaboration in the establishment of task parameters and criteria.			
<i>Course Specifications</i>	1. Assessment items are aligned with and assess all the course objectives.			
	2. Each assessment item is aligned, where appropriate, with one or more USQ graduate or discipline-based skills.			
	3. Course materials align with details provided in the course specification.			
	4. The referencing style students are required to use in this course is clearly stipulated.			

Dimensions	Baseline Standard/ Minimum Requirement	Yes	Not sure	No
<i>USQ Study Desk - Requirements for USQ StudyDesk refer to minimum standards only. Check with your faculty if higher standards are required</i>	1. The course StudyDesk provides an introductory message, posted before the start of semester, which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> welcomes students to the course introduces the teaching team for the course describes how StudyDesk will be used throughout the semester, and explains to students how best to obtain academic or technical support. 			
	2. Reviewing discussions and other student access areas on at least three [3] working days per week in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> monitor and moderate comments and discussion by students respond to student enquiries and learning activities. 			
	3. Responses to student requests for clarification or assistance should occur as early as possible, but certainly within 48 hours during the working week.			

Enquiries

Contact your LTSU representative: <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/ltsu>.

Bibliography

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