HITSA

ESTONIAN E-COURSE QUALITY LABEL

Information Technology Foundation for Education

2019

Table 1. Rubrics for quality assessment of e-learning course (analysis phase)

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
ANALYSIS	1	This course meets the needs and opportunities of the audience.	This course does not meet the needs or the opportunities for participation in the course.	This course partly meets the needs of the audience and does not take or takes only partly into account the opportunities of the audience for participation in the course.	This course meets the needs of the audience but takes only partly into account the opportunities of the audience for participation in the course.	This course fully meets both the needs and the opportunities for participation in the course.
		Has the preparation of the course considered the background data of the audience, level of motivation, learning capabilities, previous knowledge, learning style, technical knowledge and level of existing technology? (If this is the course included in the curriculum, you can evaluate whether this course helps to achieve the aim of the curriculum as a whole).				
	2	The course has formulated aims and learner-centred learning outcomes.	The aims and learning outcomes are missing or one of them is missing.	The aims and/or learning outcomes cover the course only partly or the formulated learning outcomes are teacher-centred.	The aims and learning outcomes of the course exist. There are shortcomings in formulation.	The aims and learning outcomes have been properly formulated.
		Make sure that the aims and learning outcomes have been formulated in a comprehensible manner and give an idea of what is obtained at the minimum required level of the particular course. The aims are formulated proceeding from the curriculum and the learning outcomes are learner-centred, i.e., the learner is able to prove them at the end of the course.				
	3	The content of the course corresponds to the learning outcomes.	The content of the course does not allow the learning outcomes. to be achieved.	The content of the course allows some of the learning outcomes to be achieved.	The content of the course allows most of the learning outcomes to be achieved.	The content of the course allows to achieve all learning outcomes.
		When evaluating this criterion, examine the list of the topics completed during the course (its substantive structure), in order to get an overview of the uniformity of the learning outcomes and topics.				

Table 2. Rubrics for quality assessment of e-learning course (phase of the planning of the study process)

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
PLANNING OF THE STUDY PROCESS	4	Subject syllabus/programme relies on the requirements of the educational institution. *As a rule, an educational institution has a programme with single structure and/or rules for its preparation available for the lecturers. Does the prepared programme rely on these aims?*	Subject syllabus/programme meeting the requirements of the educational institution is missing.	Subject syllabus/programme relies partially on the requirements of the educational institution.	Subject syllabus/programme relies largely on the requirements of the educational institution.	Subject syllabus/programme relies fully on the requirements of the educational institution.
	5	The pre-knowledge, skills and prerequisite subjects necessary for the learners to participate in the course has been presented. *The course states the pre-knowledge, skills and prerequisite subjects necessary for the learners. If these are unnecessary, the course must provide relevant information.*	The course does not state the pre-knowledge, skills or prerequisite subjects necessary for participation. There is also no indication that these are unnecessary.	The course does not state the pre-knowledge and skills necessary for participation but the prerequisite subjects have been stated.	The course states the pre-knowledge, skills and prerequisite subjects necessary for participation, but these have been described very concisely and may provide the learner with inadequate information.	The course states the pre-knowledge, skills and prerequisite subjects necessary for participation. If these are unnecessary, the course provides relevant information.
	6	The study activities and evaluation principles of the course correspond to the learning outcomes. *Usually, what is studied is evaluated. One must monitor whether the learners comprehend what must be learned (materials to be consulted, tasks to be solved etc.). Whether and how the achievement of the study results is checked?*	Study activities and learning outcomes are incompatible. Evaluation does not allow the achievement of learning outcomes to be measured.	Study activities and evaluation support the achievement of learning outcomes only partially.	Both the study activities and the evaluation support the achievement of the majority of learning outcomes.	Study activities and evaluation support the achievement of all learning outcomes. Evaluation allows the achievement of all learning outcomes to be measured.

Table 2. (Continued)

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
	7	Learners have been presented with the evaluation and feedbacking principles.	The course states neither the criteria for evaluating learners' work nor the principles for giving feedback.	The principles for evaluation the learners and/or feedbacking have been partially or unclearly presented in the course.	The evaluation and feedbacking principles have been presented in the course, but there are some uncertainties.	The principles for evaluating the learners and the feedbacking principles have been clearly and thoroughly described in the course.
		One must ensure that the learners are aware of what is evaluated, as well as when and how it takes place (e.g., participation in forums etc.).				
	8	The study materials and study activities correspond to the volume of the course.	The study guide / program of the course does not include information on the time required to complete the study materials and study activities.	The study guide / program of the course includes information on the time required to complete the study materials and study activities, but it doesn't correspond to a greater degree to the volume of the course.	The study guide / program of the course includes information on the time required to complete the study materials and study activities, but there are minor variations in the compatibility of the allocated time and volume of the course.	The study guide / program of the course includes information on the time required to complete the study materials and study activities, and the allocated time corresponds fully to the volume of the course.
		The volume of materials and independent work should be evaluated under this criterion, in order to assess the time (hours) a learner should spend to complete this course. Total time spent on the study process by an average student should be taken into account. Of course, this assessment is subjective and there may be slight variations (e.g., the weekly ´volume of the reading material for a 1 ECP/LW course cannot be 3000 pages or, conversely, three 50 page chapters for a 5 ECP/LW course. 1 ECP is 26 hours and 1 LW is 40 hours).				
	9	Support for the development of learning skills (learners are guided towards reflection on the studied knowledge, developing time management skills etc.).	Study activities pay no attention to the development of learning skills.	Based on study activities and/or instructions, there is reason to assume that learning skills are developed randomly.	Many study activities and/or instructions also describe the development of learning skills.	The study activities and/or instructions fully support for the development of learning skills.
		Does the course program, study guide and/or codes of conduct give instructions on time management, recommendations on studying etc.?				

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
	10	Study process is supported by technological means.	Technological means do not support the study process or even hinder it.	Technological means provide only minor support for the study process.	Most of the technological instruments used in the course are suitable for supporting the study process.	Technological means fully support the study process.
		The use of various technological means (wikis, forums etc.) in the study process is not an end in itself, but should be justified. For instance, it is possible to take into account the different learning styles and needs of learners and provide content duplicately by alternative means. However, it is confusing when in every chapter a different instrument is used for a similar activity, i.e., alternative means to provide content should be implemented moderately and a uniform style should be used throughout the course. For instance, a foreign language learning course – can a learner practice speaking by oneself, in addition to listening to audio files?				
	11	Planning of the course has taken into account previously considered concept so that the study process is reflected as a whole in the web-based study environment.	The e-course has developed step by step without previous concept and does not form a whole.	Concept has been generated in the course of creation of an e-course but it is reflected only partially in the study environment.	The e-course has a considered concept and it is largely reflected in the study environment.	The course concept is thought out and largely reflected in the study environment as a whole.
		Does the course form a whole? Have you, as the author of the course, thought out handling of the course topics, study tasks supplementing them and their distribution according to the e-learning opportunities? Is the structure of the course simple and logical and the structure comprehensible? Has the course found a suitable combination of e-learning and auditorial studies?				

Table 3. Rubrics for quality assessment of e-learning course (phase of development of the course)

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
DEVELOPMENT OF THE COURSE	12	The course is well-structured and easy to use.	The structure of the course is unclear and the learners are not provided with relevant explanation.	The structure of the course is clear and straightforward, but not always user-friendly. Several important course elements cannot be intuitively found.	The structure of the course is clear and straightforward, but not always user-friendly. Only a few important course elements cannot be intuitively found.	A learner navigating the course understands intuitively the location of the study materials, tasks, instructions etc. that are vital for the smooth completion of the course.
		The evaluation of this criterion may seem very subjective. One should follow the explanations given in the study guide and view the course "through the eyes of the learner". For instance, all the elements of the course (instruments, materials etc.) can be found intuitively.				
	13	Suitable media is used for providing the study materials (e.g., text, images, animations, audio, video etc.).	The media used for delivering the study materials are unsuitable.	The majority of the course's study materials have an unsuitable delivery medium.	There are a few study materials in the course, the delivery medium of which has not been well selected.	The media used for delivering the study materials are suitable.
		Follow which media have been used and what are their benefits for the learner from the point of view of achieving the learning outcomes of the learner. Does the use of media give any added value and diversity, or rather confuse the learner (e.g., everybody might not like the use of background music but in music theory the audio file may be necessary for analysing the composition.				
	14	The study materials comply with the best practices of creating digital study materials.	Study materials do not comply with the best practices of creating digital study materials	The majority of the study materials do not comply with the best practices of creating digital study materials	The study materials have a few errors or shortcomings that are contrary to the best practices of creating digital study materials	The study materials are in accordance with the best practices of creating digital study materials.

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
		The best practices of creating digital study materials are recommended principles set in Chapter 3.1 of the e-course manual (Pilt et al., 2010). Following of these principles helps to ensure the comprehensive user-friendliness of the created study materials. E.g., *•takes into account the learner's needs, screen-reading properties;* *• different lessons have a common structure and similar media and technological instruments;* *• textual study materials are structured (e.g., divided into sub-sections);* *• different chapters use a common design style (font, font size, font colour etc.);* *• study materials include interactive elements etc.*				
	15	Preparation of the study materials has followed the terms of use of the works of other authors *If the author has used works of other authors upon illustrating of the course and/or preparation of study materials, the terms of use of these works have been adhered to. Summaries of and quotations are made from a work which has already been lawfully made available to the public, provided that its extent does not exceed that justified by the purpose and the idea of the work as a whole which is being summarised or quoted is conveyed correctly (Estonian Copyright Act Chapter 4 § 19). In creating of the e-course, the permission is asked from the owner of economic rights of these works to use the works, except in case of free use prescribed in the Copyright Act (Chapter 4 § 19 of the Estonian Copyright Act).*	Works of other authors used upon illustrating of the course and preparation of the study materials have not followed the terms of use.	Works of other authors used upon illustrating of the course and preparation of the study materials have not largely followed the terms of use (e.g., the motivated volume has been exceeded in case of several works and permission for use of the work has not been asked from the owner of the economic rights).	In single cases works of other authors used upon illustrating of the course and preparation of the study materials have not followed the terms of use.	Illustrating of the course and preparation of the study materials have duly followed the terms of use of the works of other authors.

Table 3. (Continued)

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
	16	Works of other authors used for illustrating of the course and preparation of study materials are referred to.	Works of other authors used upon illustrating of the course and preparation of the study materials have not been referred to.	Works of other authors used upon illustrating of the course and preparation of the study materials have been referred to moderately (texts, pictures, videos).	Works of other authors used for illustrating of the course and preparation of the study materials (texts, pictures, videos, and other) are referred to, but there are some shortcomings in references (e.g., there is no list of sources at the end of the study materials, references include different reference systems or some component necessary for referring is missing: author's name, work name or source of publishing).	The works of other authors (texts, pictures, videos, and other) are correctly referred to upon illustrating of the course and preparation of study materials.
		If the author has used works of other authors for illustrating the course and/or preparation of study materials, then these are correctly referred to. The used textual sources (quotations, reviews, ideas, opinions, data and other) photos, graphics, video and audio materials are referred to. Referencing consistently uses the same referencing system. The list of used literature is enclosed with the study materials.				
	17	Method of delivery of course materials conforms to technical opportunities of the students	Method of delivery of study materials important for passing the course do not conform to the technical opportunities of the students and relevant explanations about technical requirements for participation in the course are not described (or minimum description is given).	Method of delivery of course materials does not conform to technical opportunities of the students There are deficiencies in the description of technical requirements necessary for participation in the course.	Method of delivery of the course study materials considers technical opportunities of students. Still description of technical requirements necessary for participation in the course is not sufficient.	Method of delivery of course materials conforms to technical opportunities of the students The course describes all important technical requirements for student's hardware and software.
		Considering the technical opportunities of the students is of priority. In case of different media, most common (preferably free of charge) software and formats must be used. If there is a need for paid software, this must be known already before signing up for the course and described in the study guide. The lowest speed of Internet connection necessary for viewing the materials and/or performance of learning activities is described in the course.				

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
	18	The study guide is thorough and whole and contains also an overview of auditorial studies in case of partial e-learning.	There is no study guide available for the course.	The study guide is superficial and handles the course only partially.	There is a study guide for the course but there are a few shortcomings.	The study guide is thorough by giving the students an overview of different aspects of the course (schedule, tasks, materials, instructions, etc.) and relations between them.
		The study guide is a manual which should give the students clear instructions on how to pass the course. The study guide of the course can be as a single separate document/web page or part of different documents/web pages (information necessary for the students may be formulated also in the curriculum, course description, calendar plan, etc.). For example, lack of some topics handled in the e-course cannot be excused with the statement that this part of the course is auditorial. E-course must give an overview of the process as a whole and describe also the planned auditorial part. See chapter 3.1.5 of the manual (Pilt et al.,, 2010).				
	19	Use of the study environment does not require the student obtaining of separate paid additional software.	Obtaining of paid additional software is necessary for participating in the course but no alternative possibilities have been provided for the learner.	Alternative solutions have been provided for the learners which partially cover the needs of the learners.	There is no need to obtain paid software for participation in the course or opportunities for its use are ensured.	Alternative solutions have been provided for paid software which shall cover the needs of the students or opportunities for use of paid software are ensured.
		Is the used study environment available for the students for free? Generally the aim of e-learning is to ensure the learning opportunities for all audiences (i.e., considering the learners with disabilities and different learning styles) and hence obtaining separate paid additional software is not the best practice. Naturally the special cases are allowed when different professional software and other are taught but then the students must be notified about it beforehand.				

Table 3. (Continued)

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
	20	The course is tested before use in actual study process. *Have you tested the course beforehand, consulted with a colleague, used the test group of students, or other?*	The course has not been tested before use in actual study process.	Before use in actual study process, some parts of the course have been tested with the pilot group of students or feedback is received from a colleague/expert who gives advice for improvement of the course.	Before use in an actual study process, big part of the course has been tested with a pilot group of students or feedback is received from a colleague/expert who gives advice for improvement of the course.	The course has been tested to full extent before use in an actual study process with a pilot group of students.
	21	The course is in good technical order (links open, necessary tools are working, web based literature referred from the course is available). *This criterion shows regular updating of the course which should precede conducting of the course. It is recommended that the evaluator checks the functionality and availability of the web references and tools of the course and the explanations about the technological solutions in the study instructions (e.g., software necessary for opening the media files, access to paid databases, and other).*	The course is not in good technical order. The tools or links do not work. There is no necessary explanation or instruction for accessing the web sources with limited access in the course.	Essential part of the course links or tools do not work or there is no explanation about accessing the web sources with limited access.	There are a few technical deficiencies (some links do not work or some tools do not open). In case of sources with limited access, there is an explanation on how to access them.	The course is in good technical order. In case of sources with limited access, there is an explanation on how to access them.

Table 4. Rubrics for quality assessment of e-learning course (phase of conducting of the course)

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
CONDUCTING OF THE COURSE	22	The performer of the course performs different roles (technical, organisational, social and pedagogical) or uses assistance for it.	Neither of the different roles has been completed by the performer or the assistants.	The performer of the course or his or her assistant have completed only some of the different roles.	The performer of the course or his or her assistant have completed majority of different roles.	All different roles have been excellently performed by the performer of the course or his or her assistant.
		It is not important whether just one person or his or her team performs the course. It is important that all roles are performed during the course (see chapter 4 of the manual Pilt et al., 2010) and the study instructions include information with necessary contact information. Certain roles can be delegated to the learners (e.g., instructing of fellow students or giving feedback).				
	23	Performance of the course follows the (planned) schedule.	There are no data about the schedule or they are out of date.	The planned and actual schedule of the course differ essentially and this prevents performance of the course.	There are some conflicts between the course schedule and actual performance but this does not disturb performance of the course.	The course is performed in full compliance with the schedule.
		Is the initial schedule adhered to upon conducting of the course or some remarks are made about the need to change it? Based on the needs of the learners, there may be changes to the initial schedule (e.g., need to explain longer some topic).				
	24	Active participation of the students in the study process is supported (interaction, generation of study communities, etc.)	There are no conditions created in the course to activate students (no groups, communication opportunities).	Opportunities have been created for social interaction of the students and active participation in study process, but these opportunities have not been addressed.	Opportunities for active participation in the study process have been created for the students and these are addressed too.	The students are guided to participate actively in the study process during the whole course and active participation is taken into account at evaluation.
		The lecturer gives advice to the students on how to work independently with study materials and favours active participation in the study process (e.g., participation in discussions, group work). The role of the lecturer is to ensure smoothness of discussions and, if needed, guide and activate the students. The study activities must be regular and proportionally distributed during the study process.				

Table 4. (Continued)

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
	25	Systematic feedback is given to the learners about their general progress and strong and weak sides in that course.	There is no information in the course about feedback given to the students.	The learners have been notified about the opportunity of getting feedback but there is no evidence that feedbacking takes place.	The students have been notified about the opportunity to get feedback but feedbacking is not systematic.	The students have been informed about when and where feedback is given. Feedbacking in the course is systematic (proof in the course or lecturer's self-analysis).
		The evaluation principles must be brought out in the study instruction with explanations about how the grades/outcomes are delivered to the students. The student can obtain either lecturer side individual feedback, fellow student side feedback or monitor own progress in the course (e.g., by using self-evaluation, comparative analysis or other tools).				
	26	The students are informed about the learning outcomes (grades, points).	The students have not been informed about the learning outcomes.	The learners have been informed about the way of delivering the learning outcomes and terms but there is no proof that the lecturer has followed this plan.	The students have been informed about the way and terms of delivering the learning outcomes but the lecturer has followed the plan partially.	The students have been informed about when and how the learning outcomes are delivered and the lecturer follows the plan (proof in the course or lecturer's self-analysis).
		The e-course explicitly brings out the way and term of delivering of the grades/outcomes (e.g., Moodle grade table, SIS.). And the evaluator should check whether this was actually done. If you cannot find information from the course (course is not active, evaluation is performed in some other form, etc.), then look at the feedback to the course presented in the review of the organisation or self-analysis form filled in by the author.				

Table 5. Rubrics for quality assessment of e-learning course (phase of the assessment of the course)

Phase	No	Quality requirement	Strongly disagree	Inclined to disagree	Mostly agree	Strongly agree
ASSESSMENT TO THE COURSE	27	Notes are made during the course with the aim to improve the course further.	The course improvement opportunities are not documented (notes are not made).	Some information has been collected for improvement of the course during conducting of the course but this information is not systematic.	Some information has been collected for improvement of the course during conducting of the course but the improvements have not been systematically introduced.	Some information has been collected for improvement of the course during conducting of the course and the improvement proposals have been taken into account.
		Are the aspects to be improved are noted upon conducting of the course? An example in book Pilt et al.,, 2010, Chapter 5.1 can be used for that.				
	28	Course feedbacking system works (general evaluation of the course or getting feedback from students (incl. from e-learning point of view)	There is no information in the course or from the organisational review whether and how the student can give feedback on the course.	It is possible to give feedback but its importance is not emphasised to the students.	Importance of giving feedback is emphasised on the course. Giving feedback is possible but it does not give any information from the point of view of e-learning.	Importance of giving feedback is emphasised to the students. There is feedback for the course and it also gives information from the point of view of e-learning.
		Attention is drawn to the importance of giving feedback to the course by the students so that the students were aware of it already at the beginning of the course. Giving feedback to the course can take place based on general rules of the educational institution (i.e., filling in the evaluation questionnaire of the subject via study information system) or separately on a specific course (a special forum or questionnaire). The evaluator should look for the feedback from organisation side review to the course.				