

Quality Standards Inventory

Introduction

The Quality Standards Inventory (QSI) is designed to help instructors personally evaluate the approaches and strategies used in their online courses. Divided into 5 categories, the QSI highlights principles of quality online instruction that promote active, student-directed learning. A mean score of the criteria determines to what degree a course is learner centered

Scoring

Add the total of all of the scores and divide by 37 to determine the mean score.

3.1 – 4 = High level of learner-centered instruction

2.2 – 3 = Moderate level of learner-centered instruction

1 - 2.1 = Low level of learner-centered instruction

I. Instruction

Learner-centered online instruction promotes deep levels of understanding by engaging learners in authentic, active, and relevant learning experiences and encouraging ownership of learning goals.

Criteria	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Rarely/Never (1)	Score
1. Provides Clear Learning Goals Learning outcomes, performance goals and student expectations for assignments, discussion, participation and projects are clearly outlined in syllabus					
2. Encourages Student Ownership of Learning Goals Students are encouraged to relate instructor's learning objectives to individual learning goals.					
3. Provides Detailed, Clear Instructions Syllabus provides detailed and clear instructions for course assignments and instructor notes.					



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4. Supports Active Learning and Reflection Students are encouraged to talk about what they learn, write reflectively about it, relate it to past experiences and apply it to their daily lives.					
5. Employs Accurate, Current Content Content is accurate and up-to-date.					
6. Outlines Prerequisite Skills Prerequisite skills are clearly outlined prior to course enrollment.					
7. Generates Authentic Activities Course activities have real-world relevance and allow students sustained periods of time for investigation.					

II. Facilitation

Learner-centered facilitation guides learners through interactive dialogue and exchange of ideas where student contributions are an integral component of the learning process.

Criteria	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Rarely/Never (1)	Score
8. Separates Discussion Threads Discussion threads are separated and categorized by common themes (course topics, social, course procedures).					
9. Promotes In-depth Discussions Discussion threads ask for information to clarify, summarize and encourage student participation.					



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<p>10. Encourages Elaboration Students are challenged to justify and elaborate when discussing and answering questions.</p>					
<p>11. Maintains Interactive Discussions Instructor redirects, paraphrases and gleans important information to thoroughly develop discussions.</p>					
<p>12. Generates Probing Questions Instructor generates facilitative questions (i.e., "Could you expand on...","What if you considered...","How does ___ relate to ___?") to stimulate thoughts, promote critical thinking and test ideas in open question forums.</p>					
<p>13. Deepens Dialogue Instructor deepens dialogue in discussion threads by employing a variety of different questioning techniques, making connections of students understanding to course content, and challenging students to support rationale and honor multiple perspectives.</p>					

III. Interaction

Learner-centered interaction generates collaborative learning opportunities where students develop respect for multiple views and individual interpretations through active participation in a learning community.

Criteria	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Rarely/Never (1)	Score
<p>14. Communicates Warm and Accepting Tone Instructor creates warm and accepting tone at first</p>					



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class meeting.					
15. Makes Instructor Accessible Instructor establishes set meeting times and methods to convene with students online, by phone, by e-mail, by video-conferencing or by any other method that can substitute for face-to-face meetings.					
16. Preserves Non-judgmental Climate Communication among students and instructor is non-judgmental.					
17. Maintains Respect Communication is free of negative stereotypes and is neither condescending nor patronizing.					
18. Generates Positive Social Environment Course has a positive social environment, and students see themselves as part of a community of learners.					
19. Uses Small Groups Students are periodically divided into small groups in order to facilitate communication in asynchronous discussions and collaboration on projects.					
20. Expects Communication and Collaboration Expectations for communication, collaboration and accountability among students are defined and established.					



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<p>21. Promotes Interdependence There is positive interdependence among students; students are required to define personal roles, determine how they will make collective decisions, and how they will resolve conflict if it occurs.</p>					
<p>22. Encourages Students to Teach Students serve as peer coaches and teachers in order to demonstrate mastery of content.</p>					
<p>23. Explores Multiple Roles and Perspectives Instructor provides opportunities to explore and share different perspectives and points of view on various topics.</p>					

IV. Self-Direction and Motivation

Learner-centered self-direction and motivation connects learning experiences to personal goals, motivating students to ask questions about and investigate areas of personal interest and relevance.

Criteria	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Rarely/Never (1)	Score
<p>24. Jointly Establishes Rules and Guidelines Instructor and students establish and agree upon guidelines/expectations they must adhere to for the duration of the course.</p>					
<p>25. Engages Learners Coursework engages learners and sustains motivation.</p>					



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<p>26. Establishes Relevance Instructor establishes content's relevance with case studies, potential scenarios, examples, and problems comparable to real-world situations; students clearly perceive and accept the relevance of specific learning activities in relation to larger tasks or problems.</p>					
<p>27. Generates Personal Connections to Content Instructor includes multiple perspectives and elicits relationships among concepts and skills in order to give personal meaning to content.</p>					
<p>28. Encourages Student Ownership Instructors give students opportunities to ask and investigate questions of personal interest.</p>					
<p>29. Promotes Self Sufficiency Through Coaching Instructor provides coaching at critical times and then fades support in order to promote self-sufficiency in students (i.e., scaffolding).</p>					

V. Assessment and Feedback

Learner-centered assessment and feedback provide ongoing, iterative, and individualized feedback that helps students to reflect on their progress as it relates to their learning goals.

Criteria	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Rarely/Never (1)	Score
<p>30. Provides Ongoing Assessment Instructor conducts an ongoing assessment of learners' understanding of course content.</p>					



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<p>31. Provides Accurate Assessment Learning assessment accurately reflects completion of course objectives and is consistent with learning goals.</p>					
<p>32. Promotes Self-Assessment Students are encouraged to evaluate their own progress and understanding of course content throughout the course.</p>					
<p>33. Requires Reflection Students are encouraged to reflect on their understanding of course content and gauge personal progress.</p>					
<p>34. Gives Timely Feedback Students receive timely feedback on assignments and progress from instructors.</p>					
<p>35. Provides Remediation Instructor provides remediation and/or enrichment resources for students needing additional help.</p>					
<p>36. Discusses Progress Privately Instructor privately communicates with students to discuss progress.</p>					
<p>37. Protects Privacy The privacy and security of student records are protected.</p>					
<p>TOTAL: MEAN SCORE: Total/37</p>					



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