



eLearning Rubric

A resource for quality online curriculum creation

The eCampusAlberta eLearning Rubric is designed to support the creation of quality online curriculum. The standards outlined in this document are employed by member institutions and across the post-secondary education system.

This rubric may be used to assess existing courses or those under development. It may also be used as a guide by faculty and online curriculum developers for planning purposes.

Course Standards

Support Standards

Institutional and
Administrative Standards



eLearning Rubric Quality Standards

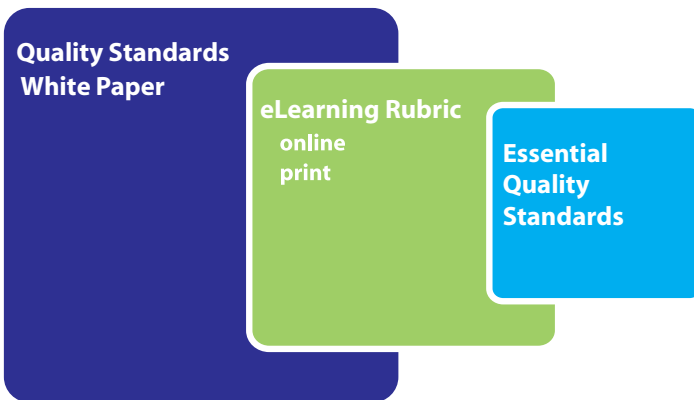
The quality standards outlined in the eLearning Rubric are grouped into three broad categories that affect a successful learner experience: Course Standards, Support Standards, and Administrative/Institutional Standards. Using the rubric to review and evaluate your course will inform the development of a quality online course in a holistic manner.

How to Use the Rubric Scoring

Use the score sheet to guide you through your curricula development. The standards have been weighted with a numerical value of importance. The Essential Quality Standards are the minimum requirements. They appear in bold throughout the rubric so they may be easily identified. On the scoresheet they are indicated with a black circle. You may wish to tally a score and the table on the following page will help guide you to an overall rating of your course.

The eLearning Rubric is one of four components of the eCampusAlberta Quality Suite. The suite was created to assist faculty and instructional designers with online curriculum development. The four components are the Quality Standards White Paper, the eLearning Rubric available in print and online, the Curricula Self-Assessment Scorecard, and the Essential Quality Standards (EQS).

eCampusAlberta Quality Suite



How are the standards ranked?

The standards outlined in this evaluation tool have been weighted with a level of importance between 1 and 3.

Critical. Value = 3

These standards are integral to an institution’s success in online programming. Omitting these items jeopardizes the success of any online learning endeavor. These items are the minimum acceptable requirements in each category.

Important. Value = 2

These standards contribute to the efficiency or effectiveness of a learner’s online experience. The omission of these items will have a major impact on the quality of learners’ experience.

Beneficial. Value = 1

These standards enhance the quality of a learner’s online experience. While they may not be integral to programming, their inclusion improves learner and faculty satisfaction as well as administrative efficiency.



	Critical 3	Important 2	Beneficial 1
Exceptional: Students and faculty alike will appreciate your commitment to high standards of eLearning excellence.	43 to 38	42 to 39	24 to 20
Outstanding: Your efforts to ensure a high quality eLearning experience are evident.	37 to 29	38 to 15	19 to 10
Satisfactory: By achieving all 28 Essential Quality Standards (EQS) you are off to a good start in the quest for eLearning quality.	28	14 to 1	9 to 1

Total Scores:

Course Standards

Goals and Objectives

- 3 a) Objectives are achievable, measurable, relevant, clearly stated and concise.
- 3 b) Objectives include critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.
- c) Goals and objectives relate to real world applications.
- 2 d) Objectives specify learning outcomes related to knowledge, skills, competencies, behaviours, and/or attitudes.

Accessibility

- 3 a) There is high contrast between the text and the background.
- 2 b) The course material is accessible, as appropriate, to learners who may have visual or auditory challenges.
- 1 c) To assist learners who use screen readers, a description of each illustration is available as an image tag.

Course Design and Development

- a) The level of language used is appropriate for the intended audience.
- b) The writing is free of bias relative to age, culture, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.
- c) The course has been piloted and/or beta tested.
- d) A bibliography or reference list includes a variety of material, such as web links (URLs), books and journals, CD-ROMS, and videos.
- e) The course is designed according to a consistent format.
- f) Learners are told whether learning activities are sequential or whether they can be completed in any order.
- 3 g) A course syllabus is provided.
- h) Learners are informed of the ways in which they can communicate with the instructor.
- i) The course is as academically rigorous as its face-to-face equivalent.
- j) Learners can realistically complete the course, given practical constraints, such as available time and resources.
- k) Appropriate supports are in place to ensure accessibility prior to learners' engagement with the course.
- 2 l) Appropriate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) concepts have been applied.

- m) Orientation information lets learners know where they are in the course.
- n) Graphic elements such as diagrams, tables, animation, and photographs illustrate or clarify information presented in the text.
- o) All components of graphics are clearly visible and aligned with text.
- p) The course is separated into modules (self-contained segments).
- ② q) Frequent opportunities are provided for practice and knowledge transfer.
- r) Learners are informed about expectations regarding group work and/or collaboration.
- s) Criteria and procedures for peer review and evaluation are clearly specified if these elements are included in the course.

- t) Links to information about institutional policies on grading and evaluation are provided.
- ① u) Lists of learning resources are divided into “required” and “optional” categories.
- v) Learning resources reflecting different points of view are provided when appropriate.

Content

- ③ a) **The content is directly related to learning objectives.**
- b) **The content is accurate, relevant, and current.**
- ② c) The content is appropriate to the learners’ ability levels.

Instructional Activities

- a) **A variety of instructional strategies are used to ensure compatibility with learners’ different interests, abilities, and learning styles.**
- ③ b) **A variety of instructional or learning activities are used to promote interactivity, such as online discussions, online conferencing, collaborative assignments, and listserv participation.**
- c) **Feedback is incorporated into learning activities.**
- d) Activities are sequenced logically, such as in chronological order or from simple to complex.
- ② e) Activities include higher order thinking skills.

Presentation and Navigation

- a) All links work.
- b) Multimedia elements do not exceed minimum hardware/software requirements.
- ③ c) The material is organized in a way that allows learners to understand relationships between parts of the course.
- d) The tone of the writing is supportive and encouraging.
- e) Tools for collaboration are provided (such as discussion boards, e-mail, telephone, wiki, and chat).

- f) The navigation scheme is clear and consistent.
- g) The table of contents gives an accurate indication of how the material is arranged.
- ② h) Components are organized consistently throughout the course.
- i) Abbreviations and symbols are defined.
- j) The typeface is common to all programs and computers, such as Times New Roman.
- k) The function of each icon or button is explained.

- l) Scrolling is minimized or facilitated with anchors.
- m) Nonstop animation elements are avoided.
- n) A glossary defines technical terms used in the course and may provide links to sources of supplementary information.
- o) Units of instruction or topics are divided into sub-units or sub-topics.
- p) The writing style is clear and direct.
- ① q) Instructions are stated simply and are easy to understand.
- r) Numbers are used to identify sequential steps in a task or process.
- s) Bullets are used to list items that are not prioritized or sequential.
- t) Terms are used consistently.
- u) Underlining is only used for hyperlinks.
- v) Headings and subheadings are used to organize content.

- ① w) The format is uncluttered and includes white space.
- x) Ragged right margins are used.

Assignments and Evaluation

- ③ a) **Learners are informed about the criteria that will be used for all evaluation.**
- b) **Course assignment instructions are clear and complete.**
- c) Assessments are aligned to learning outcomes.
- d) Appropriate assessment tools are used to measure learning.
- ② e) Feedback to learners is timely, detailed, and constructive.
- f) Self-tests are similar to the final evaluation instruments.
- ① g) Learners can use self-tests to track and evaluate their own progress.

Support Standards

Faculty Support

- a) Expert assistance in course development is available to the instructor.
- ③ b) Instructors delivering the course are trained in online course delivery methodology and techniques.
- c) Instructors are provided with support and assistance during course delivery.
- d) There are institutional incentives for innovative practices, and to encourage the development of online courses.
- ② e) Faculty orientation materials and demo courses provide information on the delivery platform, including handling incoming e-mail, e-mail attachments, viruses, and e-mail filters.
- f) There are institutional rewards for the effective teaching of online courses.
- ① g) Peer mentoring is available to instructors teaching online courses.

Student Support

- a) Program and course information is available prior to registration.
- b) Learners are notified of minimum system requirements, such as modem speed and computing speed prior to course commencement.
- c) Learners are provided with text information about how to access the course prior to commencement.
- ③ d) Student orientation materials and demo courses provide information on the delivery platform, including handling incoming e-mail, e-mail attachments, viruses, and e-mail filters.
- e) Technical support information is provided during the course.
- f) Information regarding online learning skills and practices is available to learners prior to registration.
- ② g) The learner orientation includes eCampusAlberta and 24x7 helpdesk information.
- ① h) Learners are provided with information about accessing financial resources.
- i) Learners are provided with information about making complaints.

Library and Research Support

③ a) Access to appropriate information resources is provided.

b) Learners are provided with hands-on training and information to aid them in securing material through electronic databases, inter-library loans, government archives, and news services.

c) Information and/or training in finding and evaluating the credibility of information resources is provided.

②

d) Learners are provided with information on citing sources according to a standardized format.

e) Learners are informed about the consequences of plagiarism and the failure to properly cite copyrighted material.

Institutional and Administrative Standards

Legal Clearance on all Materials

- a) Copyright clearance has been obtained for all course materials under copyright.
- b) Issues relating to the Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act are addressed.
- ③ c) Learners are informed about their right to privacy and the conditions under which their names or online submissions may be shared with others, and have signed waivers.
- ① d) A copyright statement identifies the owner(s) of the course.

Course Evaluation and Review

- ③ a) Learners are provided with the opportunity to evaluate the course anonymously.
- b) A subject matter expert periodically reviews course content.
- ② c) Course evaluation elicits feedback on all aspects of the course.
- ① d) There is a prescheduled date for the course to be reviewed and revised.

Institutional/Administrative Responsibility

- a) Electronic security measures are in place to ensure the integrity of information.
- b) A program map and/or rationale indicates how each course is related to other courses in the program and the credit value of each course.
- ③ c) Institutional guidelines exist regarding minimum standards for course design and development.
- d) Support for building and maintaining the online infrastructure is addressed by a centralized system.
- e) Data on enrolment, attrition rates, completion dates, costs, and successful/innovative uses of technology are used to evaluate program effectiveness.
- f) A documented technology plan is in place to ensure quality standards.
- g) Course development is approved through a broad peer review process.
- ② h) Instructors are required to grade and return all assignments within a certain time period.
- i) Instructor/faculty performance is evaluated.
- j) Student complaints are monitored and addressed within institutional policy.
- ① k) The institution monitors and evaluates student services personnel.

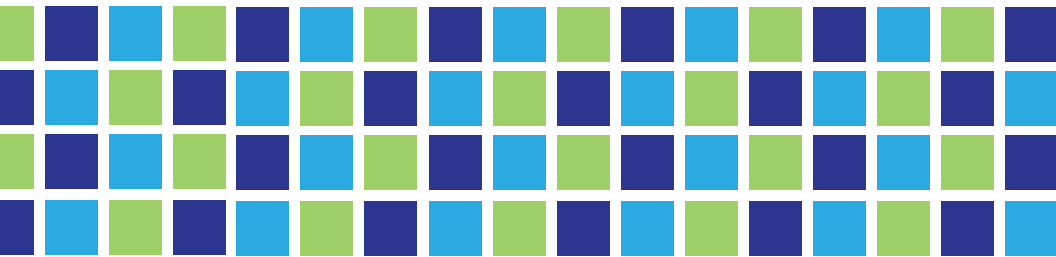
Online Learning Opportunities

www.ecampusalberta.ca



- Flexibility
- Choice
- 24x7 Help Desk





The development of these standards was informed by a review of *Quality on the Line: Benchmarks for Success in Internet-based Distance Education* prepared by the Institute for Higher Education Policy; *The Sloan Consortium Quality Framework and the Five Pillars*, published by the Sloan Consortium; and *Quality Matters: Institutional Quality Assurance in Online Learning*, a Sloan Consortium initiative.

eCampusAlberta would like to thank the member institutions for their assistance with the development and adoption of these standards

To view the online, interactive version visit:
www.ecampusalberta.ca/rubric