# **Remote/Online Course Design Checklist**

The following provides a roadmap for instructors during the course design process or as a “pre-flight check” tool using the rubric and suggested examples. This research-informed framework highlights key components essential to a high-quality learning experience for students.

*Note: Some items may not be applicable to all course contexts.*

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| **Course Element** | **Resources and Notes** |
| **1. LEARNER SUPPORT AND RESOURCES** |  |
| **Information about being an online learner and support services in introductory module on Quercus course site.** | [Link to “Getting Ready for Online” support page](https://onlinelearning.utoronto.ca/getting-ready-for-online/)  |
| ❑ | Provide links to student resources:* [General student services and resources (Student Life)](https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/)
* [Resources on conducting online research (Library Research Help)](https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/research)
* [Resources on academic support (Academic Success Centre)](https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/academic-success/)
* [Writing centre/other learner support (Writing Centres)](https://writing.utoronto.ca/)
* [Information on accessibility (Accessibility Services)](https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/)
* [Information on Quercus support (Quercus Student Guide)](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701)
 | [Use information and links provided in Quercus course template](https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/81302) |
| Course specific resources including welcome and getting started content.  |  |
| ❑ | Orientation or overview of the course overall, to help learners navigate. | [Add How This Course Works page](https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/81302/pages/how-this-course-works?module_item_id=122778) |
| ❑ | Learning outcomes and an activity list for each module, outlining tasks that are due. | [Add Module Intro pages](https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/81302/pages/week-1-outcomes-and-activities?module_item_id=123422) |
| ❑ | Contact information and short biography for the instructor, and co-instructor(s) and TA(s), if applicable. |  |
| ❑ | Guidelines for student-instructor interactions (i.e., channels for different types of questions and timelines for response). |  |
| ❑ | Contact information for the academic department or registrar. |  |
| ❑ | Syllabus (with download/print option). |  |
| ❑ | Links or reference to relevant information on academic integrity, course equity, diversity and inclusion. | [Examples in Quercus course template](https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/81302/modules) |
| ❑ | Information on access to any accompanying texts or materials not available on the course website. |  |
| **2. COURSE TECHNOLOGY AND TOOLS** |  |
| **A list of technical competencies and resources necessary for course completion is provided.** | [Link to minimum technical requirements page](https://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/covid-19/tech-requirements-online-learning/)  |
| ❑ | Requisite skills for using technology tools (websites, software, and hardware) are clearly stated and supported with resources. |  |
| ❑ | Technical skills required for participation in course learning activities scaffold in a timely manner (orientation, practice, and application — where appropriate). |  |
| ❑ | Frequently used technology tools are easily accessed. Any tools not being utilized are hidden from the course menu in Quercus. | [Link to guide on managing course navigation links](https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-manage-Course-Navigation-links/ta-p/1020) |
| ❑ | Links are provided to learner supports for tools provided by the Learning Management Engine (Quercus) to enhance learning. Institutionally supported tools are used when possible. | [Link to Quercus support for students](https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/46670/pages/student-guide) and [Refer to the ed tech catalogue for a list of supported tools](https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/46670/pages/edtech-catalogue) |
| **3. INTERACTION** |  |
| **Students are encouraged to become active learners and contribute to the online course community.** |  |
| ❑ | Introductory announcement or email sent to students providing them information on how to access the course. | Remember to make your course available! |
| ❑ | Expectations for interaction are clearly stated (netiquette, grade weighting, models/examples, and timing and frequency of contributions). | [Consider netiquette rules for online courses (edit for your course)](https://learn.canvas.net/courses/1340/pages/netiquette-the-golden-rules-for-online-courses) |
| ❑ | Course contains resources or activities intended to build a sense of class community, support open communication, and establish trust (ie ice-breaker, introductory discussion forums). |  |
| ❑ | Learners are encouraged to share resources, individual observations/experiences or integrate knowledge to support peers as a community. |  |
| **4. DESIGN AND LAYOUT** |  |
| **Course site tools are used to effectively organize and deliver course content, and to allow students to navigate with ease.** | [Refer to tips and strategies on building a course in Quercus](https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/46670/pages/build-your-course) |
| ❑ | A logical, consistent, and uncluttered layout is established. The course is easy to navigate (use of colour or icons, related content grouped, self-evident titles). |  |
| ❑ | Large blocks of information are divided into manageable sections with white space around and between the blocks of text. |  |
| ❑ | Instructions are provided and content is well written and has been proofread. |  |
| **5. ACCESSIBILITY AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN** |  |
| **Course follows accessibility and universal design principles that are critical to some learners and that benefit all learners.** | [Refer to Accessibility and Quercus support resource](https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/46670/pages/build-your-course#accessibility) |
| ❑ | Text is formatted with titles, headings, and other styles to enhance readability and improve the structure of the document. |  |
| ❑ | There is enough contrast between text and background for the content to be easily viewed |  |
| ❑ | Text equivalents are provided for visual and audio elements ("alt" tags, captions, transcripts, etc.).  |  |
| ❑ | Hyperlink text is descriptive and makes sense when out of context (avoid using "click here" or “read more”). |  |
| **6. CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES** |  |
| **Students have the opportunity to interact with the content, their peers, and their instructor(s).** | [Review strategies for active learning](https://teaching.utoronto.ca/ed-tech/online-learning/continuity-planning-and-online-learning/#active_learning) |
| ❑ | Access is offered to a variety of engaging resources that facilitate communication and collaboration, deliver content, and support learning and engagement. |  |
| ❑ | Activities are provided for learners to develop higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills, such as critical reflection and analysis. |  |
| ❑ | Activities are included that emulate real world applications of the discipline, such as experiential learning, case studies, and problem-based activities when applicable |  |
| ❑ | Open Educational Resources, free, or low-cost materials are used when available. | [See Open UToronto](https://ocw.utoronto.ca/) and [UofT Library resources](https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/) |
| ❑ | Modeling academic integrity, instructor appropriately cites all resources and materials used throughout the course.  |  |
| **7. ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK** |  |
| **Clear outline of process and criteria for evaluation of the achievement of the learning outcomes.** | [Refer to CTSI’s “Assessing Learning” website](https://teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching-support/strategies/continuity-planning/online-remotely-pnt/assessing-learning/) |
| ❑ | Learning outcomes for each unit/module are connected to relevant activities and assessment. Outcomes use active verbs, are specific and measurable. | [Refer to Bloom’s Taxonomy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloom%27s_taxonomy) |
| ❑ | Faculty course grading policies are followed. Include consequences of late submissions, clearly stated in the course information area and syllabus. |  |
| ❑ | Course provides learners a scaffolded progression through content, combining both graded assignments and formative feedback on mastery of content.  |  |
| ❑ | Criteria for the assessment of a graded assignment are clearly articulated (rubrics, exemplary work).  |  |
| ❑ | Learners have opportunities to review their performance and assess their own learning throughout the course (pre-tests, automated self-tests, reflective assignments, etc.). |  |
| ❑ | Ensure assessments include tasks and questions that allow students to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes that you have identified.  |  |

This document was developed by Online Learning Strategies, University of Toronto, August 2020. Adaptation and distribution of this resource to address academic or divisional program needs is permitted and encouraged.

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