

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.

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
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide links to student resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● General student services and resources (Student Life) ● Resources on conducting online research (Library Research Help) ● Resources on academic support (Academic Success Centre) ● Writing centre/other learner support (Writing Centres) ● Information on accessibility (Accessibility Services) ● Information on Quercus support (Quercus Student Guide) 	Use information and links provided in Quercus course template
Course specific resources including welcome and getting started content.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Orientation or overview of the course overall, to help learners navigate.	Add How This Course Works page
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning outcomes and an activity list for each module, outlining tasks that are due.	Add Module Intro pages
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact information and short biography for the instructor, and co-instructor(s) and TA(s), if applicable.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Guidelines for student-instructor interactions (i.e., channels for different types of questions and timelines for response).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact information for the academic department or registrar.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Syllabus (with download/print option).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Links or reference to relevant information on academic	Examples in Quercus course

	integrity, course equity, diversity and inclusion.	template
<input type="checkbox"/>	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
<input type="checkbox"/>	Requisite skills for using technology tools (websites, software, and hardware) are clearly stated and supported with resources.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical skills required for participation in course learning activities scaffold in a timely manner (orientation, practice, and application — where appropriate).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	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
<input type="checkbox"/>	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 and Refer to the ed tech catalogue for a list of supported tools
3. INTERACTION		
Students are encouraged to become active learners and contribute to the online course community.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Introductory announcement or email sent to students providing them information on how to access the course.	Remember to make your course available!
<input type="checkbox"/>	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)
<input type="checkbox"/>	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).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	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
<input type="checkbox"/>	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).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Large blocks of information are divided into manageable sections with white space around and between the blocks of text.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	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
<input type="checkbox"/>	Text is formatted with titles, headings, and other styles to enhance readability and improve the structure of the document.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	There is enough contrast between text and background for the content to be easily viewed	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Text equivalents are provided for visual and audio elements ("alt" tags, captions, transcripts, etc.).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	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
<input type="checkbox"/>	Access is offered to a variety of engaging resources that facilitate communication and collaboration, deliver content, and support learning and engagement.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Activities are provided for learners to develop higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills, such as critical reflection and analysis.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Activities are included that emulate real world applications of the discipline, such as experiential learning, case studies, and problem-based activities when applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Open Educational Resources, free, or low-cost materials are used when available.	See Open UToronto and UofT Library resources

<input type="checkbox"/>	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
<input type="checkbox"/>	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
<input type="checkbox"/>	Faculty course grading policies are followed. Include consequences of late submissions, clearly stated in the course information area and syllabus.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Course provides learners a scaffolded progression through content, combining both graded assignments and formative feedback on mastery of content.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Criteria for the assessment of a graded assignment are clearly articulated (rubrics, exemplary work).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learners have opportunities to review their performance and assess their own learning throughout the course (pre-tests, automated self-tests, reflective assignments, etc.).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	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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