E-xcellence / OpenupEd
Quality benchmarks for MOOCs
DRAFT

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Introduction

The proposed benchmarks have been derived from *Quality Assessment for E-learning: a Benchmarking Approach* (Williams, Kear & Rosewell 2012). These benchmarks, manual and review process were developed and refined through a series of projects involving some 35 European HEIs since 2005. They were designed to complement or supplement existing QA processes by focussing on e-learning aspects. More information on the E-xcellence Label can be found at http://e-xcellencelabel.eadtu.eu/.

The OpenupEd MOOC benchmarks below have been referred back to the corresponding E-xcellence benchmark. Please consult the E-xcellence manual (available online http://e-xcellencelabel.eadtu.eu/tools/manual) for more context and guidance notes to each benchmark, and for detailed performance indicators that may be used as evidence.

OpenupEd quality process

The overall quality process for OpenupEd MOOCs is expected to be as follows:

- OpenupEd partners will be Higher Education Institutions (HEI) that meet national requirements for quality assurance and accreditation.

- The HEI should have an internal QA system in place to approve a MOOC.

- The HEI obtain the OpenupEd MOOC label at entry by a self-assessment and review process that will consider benchmarks both at institutional and course level (for two courses initially).

- The OpenupEd MOOC label must be renewed periodically. Between institutional reviews, additional MOOCs will be reviewed at course level only.

- The institution evaluates and monitors its MOOCs in presentation.

- The overall quality process is intended to encourage quality enhancement through self-assessment and review.

- The OpenupEd MOOC benchmarks are themselves provisional and open to revision.

The OpenupEd features

OpenupEd promises to bring some distinctive features to the MOOC landscape. OpenupEd aims to contribute to an opening up of education to the benefit of both of learners and of wider society while reflecting European values such as equity, quality and diversity.

To ensure that OpenupEd courses meet this mission, courses should show eight common features:

- Openness to learners
- Digital openness
- Learner-centred approach
- Independent learning
- Media-supported interaction
- Recognition options
- Quality focus
- Spectrum of diversity

The benchmarks below have been mapped to these features. This means that the benchmarks can also be used to gather evidence that a MOOC (or more broadly a program of MOOCs) support the OpenupEd features. In turn, supporting these features helps to ensure that OpenupEd MOOCs reflect the values of equity, quality and diversity.

Openness to learners

This captures aspects such as: open entry (no formal pre-requisites), freedom to study at time, place and pace of choice, flexible pathways, suitability for a wide variety of lifelong learners.

Digital openness

Course material should form an Open Educational Resource (OER) and be licensed (eg using CC-BY-SA or similar) so that material can be reused, revised, and remixed.

Learner-centred approach

Courses should aid students to construct their own learning from a rich environment, and to share and communicate it with others; they should not simply focus on the transmission of content knowledge to the student.

Independent learning

A MOOC should provide high quality materials to enable an independent learner to progress through self-study.

Media-supported interaction

Course materials should make best use of online affordances (interactivity, communication, collaboration) as well as rich media (video and audio) to engage students with their learning.

Recognition options

Successful course completion should be recognised as indicating worthwhile educational achievement.

Quality focus

There should be a consistent focus on quality in the production and presentation of a MOOC course.

Spectrum of diversity

A course should be inclusive and accessible to the wide diversity of European citizens.

How to use the benchmarks

The benchmarks can be used as an initial self-evaluation on which to base a more detailed review. The initial assessment should make an initial judgement of how fully each benchmark is achieved. It will also highlight where benchmarks may not be fully appropriate or which fail to capture aspects of good practice in your HEI and MOOC and where additional indicators might be helpful.

A more detailed self-evaluation should follow up by first agreeing a set of benchmarks that fit your HEI and MOOC. Evidence should then be gathered, ideally by a small team that includes different stakeholders such as management, academics, course designers, tutors and students. The output from this self-evaluation should be an agreed document that provides, for each benchmark, a judgment of achievement supported by brief evidence. A roadmap of improvement actions should then be prepared.

The self-evaluation and improvement roadmap will form the basis for a review and discussion with external experts. The OpenupEd label will be awarded on the outcome of this final review. Note that it is not expected that every benchmark will be achieved by every HEI and a diversity of approaches is welcomed.

Key to table

OpenupEd features

OL	Openness to learners	
DO	Digital openness	
LC	Learner-centred approach	
IL	Independent learning	
MI	Media-supported interaction	
RO	Recognition options	
QF	Quality focus	
SD	Spectrum of diversity	

Levels

NA	Not achieved
PA	Partially achieved
LA	Largely achieved
FA	Fully achieved

The first column of the table gives a reference to the corresponding benchmark in the E-xcellence manual. Please refer to the manual for background and detailed indicators.

References

Williams, K; Kear, K and Rosewell, J (2012). *Quality Assessment for E-learning: a Benchmarking Approach* (2nd ed.). Heerlen, The Netherlands: European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU). [available online: http://e-xcellencelabel.eadtu.eu/tools/manual]

EADTU

e-next BM #	Benchmark / indicator	OL	DO	LC	IL	MI	RO	QF	SD		NA	PA	LA	FA
	Benchmark / indicator	OpenupEd values									Rating			
		Openness to learners	Digital openness	Learner-centred approach	Independent learning	Media-supported interaction	Recognition options	Quality focus	Spectrum of diversity		Not adequate	Partial adequate	Largely adequate	Fully adequate
	Institutional level													
	Strategic management													
1	The institution has a MOOC strategy that relates to its overarching strategies for e-learning and open education.	x						x	x					
2	Monitoring and research of educational and technological developments inform the development of MOOCS. There is an organisational framework to foster such innovation and development.							x						
3	The institution has a strategy for the appropriate resourcing of MOOC development. It has a business model, appropriate to the institutional mission, that addresses the sustainability of MOOC programmes.													
4	The institution has a service relationship to MOOC participants that addresses ethical and legal dimensions.								x					
5	Collaborative and partnership activities have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and operational agreements exist where appropriate. Policies exist that cover issues such as intellectual property rights and open licensing.		x											
	The institution has a quality policy that relates to national frameworks, and the MOOC offering is related to that process.							x						

	Benchmark / indicator	OL	DO	LC	IL	MI	RO	QF	SD		NA	PA	LA	FA
	Curriculum design													
6	The institution makes explicit the relationship between its MOOC portfolio and its mainstream curriculum.	x					x							
8	The MOOC portfolio provides for the development of students' cognitive skills, key/transferrable skills, and professional/practical skills in addition to knowledge and understanding.			x	x		x							
	Course design													
16	The institution provides templates or guidelines for layout and presentation of MOOCS to support consistency across the portfolio. These templates have the flexibility to accommodate a range of teaching and learning methods.		x						x					
18	Course materials, including the intended learning outcomes, are regularly reviewed, up-dated and improved using feedback from stakeholders.							x						
	The institution specifies an appropriate licence for MOOC components, and has a mechanism to track intellectual property rights.		x											
	Course delivery													
19, 20, 21	The MOOC platform is reliable, secure and assures appropriate levels of privacy. Provision is made for system maintenance, monitoring and review of performance.		x			x								
22	The MOOC platform provides a range of online tools which are appropriate for the educational models adopted.			x	x	x			x					

	Benchmark / indicator	OL	DO	LC	IL	MI	RO	QF	SD		NA	PA	LA	FA
24	Material and information provided on the MOOC platform is regularly monitored, reviewed and updated. The responsibility for this is clearly defined and those responsible have appropriate and secure access to the system to enable revision and updating.		x					x						
	Staff support													
25, 26	The institution provides appropriate training for academic and support staff to develop the skills required to develop and deliver e-learning.							x						
27, 28	Educational research and innovation in e-learning are regarded as high status activities. There are mechanisms for the dissemination of good practice.							x						
29, 30	The institution provides adequate support and resources to MOOC staff and manages workloads appropriately.							x						
	Student support													
31	MOOC students are provided with clear and up-to-date information about courses including aims/objectives, learning and assessment methods, workload and prerequisite knowledge. Where possible, courses should be related to national or European academic frameworks or specifications.	x			x	x								
32	The rights, roles and responsibilities of MOOC students and those of their institution are clearly stated.	x			x									
9, 33	The institution uses social networking to foster academic communities among MOOC students.			x		x			x					
34, 35	MOOC students have clear routes to academic, technical and administrative support. The level of support provided by the institution is clearly stated.			x	x									

EADTU

	Benchmark / indicator	OL	DO	LC	IL	MI	RO	QF	SD		NA	PA	LA	FA
	## Course level													
10	A clear statement of learning outcomes for both knowledge and skills is provided.				x									
11	There is reasoned coherence between learning outcomes, course content, teaching and learning strategy (including use of media), and assessment methods.				x			x						
13	The course content is relevant, accurate, and current.				x			x						
12	Staff who write and deliver the course have the skills and experience to do so successfully.							x						
	Course components have an open licence and are correctly attributed. Reuse of material is supported by the appropriate choice of formats and standards.		x											
16	Courses conform to institutional guidelines for layout and presentation and are as consistent as possible across a programme.		x											
14, 15	The course contains sufficient interactivity (student-to-content or student-to-student) to encourage active engagement. The course provides learners with regular feedback through self-assessment activities, tests or peer feedback.			x	x	x								
7	Learning outcomes are assessed using a balance of formative and summative assessment appropriate to the level of certification.	x			x									
17	Assessment is explicit, fair, valid and reliable. Measures appropriate to the level of certification are in place to counter impersonation and plagiarism.	x					x							
18	Course materials are reviewed, up-dated and improved using feedback from stakeholders.							x						