European Association of Distance Teaching Universities

SEQUENT
Supporting Quality in E-learning
European Networks
7-09-2015 (ENQA)

George Ubachs (EADTU)
EADTU is Europe’s leading institutional association for online, open and flexible distance higher education covering 25 nations.
Policy Areas

- OER and MOOCs
- Networked Curricula
- Virtual Mobility
- Empowering universities
- University Business cooperation
- Knowledge Sharing
- Quality in online, open and flexible higher education
Main challenges in Higher Education

Challenges with regard to **excellence in teaching**
- Large student numbers - low student staff ratios

Challenges with regard to **education and innovation**
- Research and innovation - delivering high quality education

Challenges with regard to **inclusiveness**
- Knowledge society – need for basic competences and digital literacy skills

Solutions require rethinking and redesigning campus education ->
new modes of teaching and introducing ICT based learning
The university of tomorrow

Three complementary educational segments are emerging:

• Blended and online education
• Blended and online continuous education
• Non-degree education and online open education and MOOCs
Three educational zones

Degree education zone, backbone in the education system to develop complex academic and professional competences: bachelor, master, PhD – increasingly blended solutions to raise quality for growing student numbers. Higher education systems provide flexibility for lifelong learners.

Education and training on demand, valorisation of knowledge to support innovation in the public and private sector, based on research and development. Flexibility requires online or blended solutions, such as (virtual) seminars, CPD, knowledge alliance and corporate university initiatives, short cycle programmes, master classes, expert schools, etc. It includes knowledge networks for professionals or business sectors.

Open education and knowledge sharing zone, pushing knowledge online into the public domain: OERs, MOOCs, open media, open access/open innovation materials – preferably designed and arranged according to the needs of user groups/networks.
Three educational zones

• The zones largely correspond with informal, formal and non-formal learning
• The zones are mutually dependent and are strengthening each other
• The zones require different institutional policies/strategies and business models
Three critical features

• student-centred teaching based on high quality learning environments;

• openness to learners through flexible, inclusive structures and methods that take higher education to students when and where they need it;

• networked education and mobility, where students can learn across national, sectoral and institutional boundaries.
A potential shift in the distribution of teaching time and cost (Laurillard, 2014)

Reducing
- Original design and preparation of learning activities and resources
- Presentation
- Summative assessment
- Administration

Increasing
- Evidence-based adaptation of existing activities and resources
- Collaboration on development
- Innovative specialised contributions
- Student guidance
- Formative assessment
- Professional development
- Teaching evaluation
University’s interest

- Enhance quality of teaching
- Enhance quality of offerings and generate new offerings
- Support face-to-face formats
- Increased collaboration, educational partnerships
- Allow for scalability, reach a wider audience
- Re-allocate staff time and reduce cost
- Learning analytics

Improve accessibility, flexibility, interaction
Next to institutional considerations to increase quality of education, there are two emerging external drivers:
- Cultural rather than a technological shift
- Increased competition in a global context

For universities ICT is no longer an optional element for enhancing education, but becoming a must.
Convergence in education by e-learning

Changing Communication patterns between students and tutors
- Demand for increased communications
- Expectations of 24x7 support
- Asynchronous communication expands participation
- Discussion routinely integrated within course design
- Student forums and chat rooms extend informal communication

Web Resources replace text material
- Information and learning resources are not limited by book ownership or library access

Networked curricula with the support of ICT and e-learning
- International exchange of students via on-line platforms

OER
We expect that the QA community will meet increasing use of OERs in the future Content – but also tools, licences, practices…
Anticipating organisations

- Governmental bodies
- LERU: Online Learning at RIUs
- EUA: Survey on E-learning in the European HE institutions
- ACA: Making sense of MOOCs
- NVAO: MOOCs and online HE survey
- EU: the Changing Pedagogical Landscape study on new modes of teaching, High level group
QA-agencies and e-learning

From the ENQA Sigtuna Seminar on QA in e-learning (Oct. 2009)

• establish a **solid quality assurance system** in Europe
• eLearning should not be evaluated separately,
• There is a **need for a common definition and understanding** on all aspects of eLearning.
• There is a **need for a “common language”** that would help higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies strive for the same goal.
• It is important to **meet and discuss quality assurance at the European level and between different stakeholders** in the educational sector
• to provide **adequate training** for academic professionals, higher education providers and quality evaluation experts.
SEQUEST

- Supporting Quality in E-learning European Networks: EADTU, EFQUEL and ENQA

- The “SEQUEST” aims to promote excellence in the use of ICT in higher education, with a clear goal to prepare European Universities and QA-agencies in line with the European Modernization Agenda and the opening up education programme
For universities ICT is no longer an optional element for enhancing education, but a must.

Technology has become the natural environment of a new generation of students it is essential for universities to anticipate on that.

Expectations of students are changing and universities have to realise that they have to shift to quality ICT supported education to keep up with changing demand.

QA agencies need to be part of this.
OBJECTIVES

• To **involve** governments, universities and QA agencies in the use of new modes of teaching

• Sharing expertise on **supporting instruments**

• To **support** universities in the adoption of a QA and e-Learning strategy, through dissemination and training activities.
Instruments under SEQUENT
E-xcellence: QA in e-learning instrument

• 📘 manual
  – reference tool for the design and assessment of e-learning programmes
  – benchmarks, quality criteria and notes for guidance against which e-learning programmes and their support systems may be judged

• 📄 assessors notes
  – provide a more detailed account of the issues and the approaches. Good practices for various situations.

• 🌍 web-based instrument
  ➢ Quick scan
  ➢ Full assessment
E-xcellence: QA in e-learning instrument

- Curriculum design, Course design, Course delivery, Services (student and staff support), Management (institutional strategies)

- E-xcellence focuses on elements in course provision that contribute to Lifelong Learning schemes, like:
  - ease of access to courses and services
  - new forms of interaction (students and staff)
  - flexibility and personalisation

- E-xcellence is a benchmarking instrument.
Why benchmarking?

The system of benchmarking includes:

• The institution taking the responsibility for QA
• Self-evaluation as a bases for self-improvement
• Using peer reviewers as reference and input for improvement

*In a collaborative process of dialogue we create an environment of learning from each other

*In a process of comparing the university’s’ performance with best practices in the field of e-learning we identify weaknesses and strengths

• Setting a roadmap for improvement
E-xcellence tool will help the university:

- to develop e-learning programmes
- to guide the internal discussion
- to improve the quality of e-learning performance
- to learn from other similar institutions
- to use existing good-practices
- to be up-to date on developments in e-learning
Manual

The instrument is based on the E-xcellence manual containing the benchmark statements, with the criteria and indicators. In the guide you can find the criteria and indicators. The structure of the instrument is identical to the sections in the guide and are organised into six sections.

- Preface
- Chapter 1: Strategic Management
- Chapter 2: Curriculum Design
- Chapter 3: Course Design
- Chapter 4: Course Delivery
- Chapter 5: Staff Support
- Chapter 6: Student Support

Annexes:
- Glossary

Read, share and apply the newest version of the E-xcellence Manual with the latest benchmarks in quality e-learning performance. Next to an overall update of the full manual you can find new benchmarks on:

- Open Educational Resources
- Libraries as knowledge brokers
- Social media in higher education.

Pay with a Tweet

Full manual
Community

Join our community
Our community is a space where you can meet other members, share good practices and experiences, ask other members for advice, etc. Thus, a place where we can stay connected.

Stay connected
This community is a space where you can present your university to other members and share your good practices and expertise. It also works the other way around. It is a space where you will find good practices and expertise to make your roadmap a success. It is a place where we can stay connected. You are welcome and encouraged to leave messages, join our forum, upload additional videos and images related to the E-xcellence label.

Please try to contribute to our community as much as possible, and invite other label members to join our community. Thank you.
## Institutions involved

### Core Partners (2005-2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Institution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>EADTU (The Netherlands)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Open Universiteit Nederland (The Netherlands)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Open University (United Kingdom)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>OULU-University (Finland)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED) (Spain)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>PROSE (Belgium)</td>
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### Universities that used E-xcellence

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<tr>
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<th>Institution</th>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Centre National d'Enseignement à Distance (CNED)</td>
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<td>Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC)</td>
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<td>Estonian Information Technology Foundation (EITSA)</td>
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<td>National Council for Distance Education (APERTUS)</td>
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<td>Network per l'Universita Ovunque (NETTUNO)</td>
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<td>European University Association (EUA)</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie (NVAO)</td>
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</table>
Universities that used E-xcellence

14 International Telematic University UNINETTUNO (Italy)
15 Tallinn University (Estonia)
16 Högskoleverket / NSHU (Sweden)
17 KU Leuven (Belgium)
18 The Czech Association of Distance Learning University (CADUV)
19 University of Hradec Králové (Czech Republic)
20 Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava (Slovakia)
21 Universitäre Fernstudien Schweiz (Switzerland)
22 Hungarian e-University Network (Hungary)
23 University of Southern Denmark
24 University of Copenhagen
25 Aarhus University
26 University of Latvia
27 Lund University
28 University of Kuopio
29 University of Porto
30 University of Bologna
31 Universidade Aberta (UAb), Portugal
32 Open University of Cyprus (OUC), Cyprus
Universities that used E-xcellence

33 Riga Technical University (RTU), Latvia
34 Akademia Górniczo-Hutnicza (AGH), Poland
35 Hellenic Open University (HOU), Greece
36 Kaunas University of Technology (KTU), Lithuania
37 MESI (RU)

European and Global stakeholders

38 European Centre for Strategic Management of Universities (ESMU), Belgium
39 European University Association
40 African Council for Distance Learning (ACDE), Kenya
41 CommonWealth of Learning (COL), Canada
42 Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Quality in Distance Higher Education (CALED), Ecuador
43 Association for Asian Open Universities (AAOU)
44 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), France
45 International Council for Distance Education (ICDE)
46 EADTU Student Council, The Netherlands
47 EURASHE
48 The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE)
QA-agencies reached with E-xcellence

- ENQA as Associate partner in the project NEXT
- Portuguese Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education – (A3ES),
- La Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación (ANECA, Spain),
- Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad (VLIR),
- Vlaamse Hogescholenraad (VLOHRA),
- Dutch-Flemish accreditation body (NVAO),
- Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre (HEQEC – AIKNC),
- Polish Quality Assurance Agency for Technical Universities (KAUT),
- Higher Education Planning, Evaluation, Accreditation and Coordination Council (YÖDAK, TR)
- Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency (HQAA).
OpenupEd

• OpenupEd is an open, non-profit partnership for MOOCs
• OpenupEd aims to open up education to the benefit of learners and the wider society while reflecting values such as equity, quality and diversity.
• The vision is to reach learners interested in online higher education in a way that meets their needs and accommodates their situation.
Proposed definition

**MOOCs** are courses designed for large numbers of participants, that can be accessed by anyone anywhere as long as they have an internet connection, are open to everyone without entry qualifications, and offer a full/complete course experience online for free.

In more detail the table 1 presents the different dimensions of MOOCs related to this definition. Discussion notes on these dimensions and criteria are referred to by [1] and can be found here after.

**Table 1: Criteria of different dimensions of proposed MOOC definition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension definition of MOOC</th>
<th>Criteria deciding for a MOOC</th>
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<tr>
<td>Massive An online course <em>designed</em> for large number of participants [1]</td>
<td>- Number of participants is larger than can be taught in a ‘normal’ campus class room / college situation (&gt;150 = <strong>Dunbar’s number</strong>)</td>
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<td>- The (pedagogical model of the) course is such that the efforts of all services (including of academic staff on tutoring, tests, etc.) does not increase significantly as the number of participants increases.</td>
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</table>

OpenupEd

OpenupEd is an open, non-profit partnership on MOOCs

OpenupEd aims to contribute to opening up education to the benefit of learners and the wider society while reflecting values such as equity, quality and diversity.

Offering over 292 MOOCs in 14 different languages. Another 60 MOOCs will follow shortly

With >100 with an option to do a formal exam (ECTS credits).
Why bother with quality?

- Students – know what they are committing to
- Employers – recognition of content and skills
- Authors – personal reputation, 'glow' of success
- Institutions – brand reputation
- Funders – governments
- Quality agencies – on behalf of above
OpenupEd features

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

• Benchmarking intended as an improvement tool
  – Quality enhancement
  – Identification of weaknesses and strengths
  – Action plan for improvement
• Derived from E-xcellence benchmarks
• It is not expected that every institution will achieve every benchmark or feature
• Embrace diversity!
# Course level

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<th>Benchmark/Indicator</th>
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</table>
Benchmarks – course level

22 A clear statement of learning outcomes for both knowledge and skills is provided.

23 There is reasoned coherence between learning outcomes, course content, teaching and learning strategy (including use of media), and assessment methods.

24 Course activities aid students to construct their own learning and to communicate it to others.

25 The course content is relevant, accurate, and current.

26 Staff who write and deliver the course have the skills and experience to do so successfully.

27 Course components have an open licence and are correctly attributed. Reuse of material is supported by the appropriate choice of formats and standards.

28 Courses conform to guidelines for layout, presentation and accessibility.
Assessment is explicit, fair, valid and reliable. Measures appropriate to the level of certification are in place to counter impersonation and plagiarism. See comments to Benchmark 29 above.

The advent of digital badges (for example Mozilla open badges) provides a method of rewarding achievement that may be appropriate for MOOCs. The award of digital badges can be linked to automated or peer assessment. Digital badges have an infrastructure that verifies the identity of the holder and provides a link back to the issuer and the criteria and evidence for which it was awarded. Badges thus may provide a validated award that can be kept distinct from the HEIs normal qualifications.

See also:
E-xcellence benchmark #17
Chapter 3 Course design
§ 2.4 Assessment procedures
§ 3.4 Assessment
§ 4.2.5 Online assessment
15 The institution provides appropriate training for academic and support staff to develop the skills required to develop and deliver e-learning.

Evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Openness to learners</th>
<th>Digital openness</th>
<th>Learner-centred</th>
<th>Independent learning</th>
<th>Media-supported interaction</th>
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<th>Quality focus</th>
<th>Spectrum of diversity</th>
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Which OpenupEd features are supported by this evidence?

Has this benchmark been achieved?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not achieved</th>
<th>Partially achieved</th>
<th>Largely achieved</th>
<th>Fully achieved</th>
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## Action plan

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Planned action</th>
<th>Timescale &amp; Responsible person</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institutional level</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic management</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The institution has a MOOC strategy that relates to its overarching</td>
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<td>strategies for e learning, open education and open licensing.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Research and monitoring of developments in education and technology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>inform the design of MOOCs. There is an organisational framework to</td>
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<td>foster this.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>The institution has a strategy for the appropriate resourcing of MOOC</td>
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<td>development. It has a business model, appropriate to the institutional</td>
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<td></td>
<td>mission, that addresses the sustainability of MOOCs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The institution has a service relationship to MOOC participants that</td>
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<td>addresses ethical and legal dimensions including accessibility and data</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>protection.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Collaborative and partnership activities have clearly defined roles and</td>
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<td>responsibilities and operational agreements exist where appropriate.</td>
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Some challenges

• How can **universities** apply QA instruments for online education in combination with running systems?

• How can **QA-agencies** assist in the removal of barriers for online education?

• How can **governments** provide room for innovation.

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