

Evaluating Online Course Quality

The playbook describes a procedure for assessing the quality of online courses. It highlights the importance of evaluating instructor expertise, curriculum depth, and the significance of peer reviews to ensure the rigor and value of the course.

Step 1: **Instructor Check**

Research the instructor's qualifications, including their educational background, professional experience, and teaching credentials. Look for information on the course platform, the instructor's personal or professional website, and professional networking sites.

Step 2: **Curriculum Review**

Examine the course syllabus for curriculum depth. Assess the comprehensiveness of the topics covered, the learning objectives, and whether there are assessments to gauge student understanding. Ensure that the course content is up-to-date with current industry or academic standards.

Step 3: **Peer Evaluation**

Read through peer reviews and student feedback, if available. Look for recurring themes in the feedback, both positive and negative. Pay attention to comments about the course's impact on learners' knowledge and skills, and the overall student experience.

Step 4: Compare Offerings

Compare the course with other similar offerings. Consider factors such as the depth of the material, the length of the course, and the inclusivity of different learning styles. Analyze how the course stands out or falls short in comparison to its competitors.

Step 5: Accreditation Check

Verify if the course or the institution offering it is accredited or recognized by relevant academic or professional bodies.

Accreditation can be a mark of quality and a requirement for certain professional pathways.

Step 6: Final Evaluation

Synthesize the information gathered from previous steps. Weigh the strengths and weaknesses of the course's instructor, curriculum, and peer reviews. Come to a conclusion regarding the course's overall quality and usefulness for your or other potential students' goals.

General Notes

Continuous Updates

Online courses are continuously updated. It's important to revisit and review a course periodically to ensure the evaluation remains current.

Contextual Importance

Certain criteria may be more or less important depending on the context of the course. For example, in a practical skill-based course, the up-to-dateness of content and the industry experience of the instructor might outweigh academic credentials.

