

THE E-LEARNING CHECKLIST

TO SUSTAINABLE E-LEARNING

Introduction

The e-learning¹ checklist has been developed in the SustainVet project (Sustainable Quality in Vocational Education and Training) which is funded under the EU Lifelong Learning Programme (<https://sustainvet.wordpress.com/>). This project supports the implementation/use of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework through the use of self-assessment and peer review in the quality assurance process of VET organisations.

In close cooperation between VET and the world of work the project has developed a set of quality criteria for “Sustainability in VET” that can be used for initial and continuous training of VET teachers, trainers, tutors and VET institution managers as well as for transnational peer reviews.

The e-learning checklist is an important component of this approach. It is a working document subject to regular reviews and should be used as a resumé of “where you are” and an action list.

Goal

The goal of this e-learning checklist is:

- To open discussions within your organisation of how to make e-learning more sustainable.
- To develop a checklist to set the agenda you need to address.

However, ticking all the boxes does not necessarily make e-learning an essential and sustainable component of your organisation.

¹By e-learning we mean “E-learning (or eLearning) is the use of electronic media and information and communication technologies (ICT) in education. E-learning is broadly inclusive of all forms of educational technology in learning and teaching. E-learning is inclusive of, and is broadly synonymous with multimedia learning, technology-enhanced learning (TEL), computer-based instruction (CBI), computer-based training (CBT), computer-assisted instruction or computer-aided instruction (CAI), internet-based training (IBT), web-based training (WBT), online education, virtual education, virtual learning environments (VLE) (which are also called learning platforms), m-learning, and digital educational collaboration. These alternative names emphasize a particular aspect, component or delivery method.”

Who should use the checklist?

In order to work with this checklist efficiently, it is recommended that

- The management team needs to be involved initially to ensure that the organisation “buys in” to the process.
- The checklist should be used throughout the organisation as it allows everyone, no matter in what position, to recognise and contribute to the discussion and action.

The e-learning checklist is designed for VET organisations but the SustainVet project believes it can also be applied to other types of sectors.

Who should use the checklist?

It is advisable to take into account the following aspects when you intend to use this checklist:

- Get “buy-in” from across the organisation.
- Clearly state what you are doing and why.
- Set deadlines for responses.
- It needs regular reviews – this is not something that is just ticked and done with but remains a “living” document. Review the responses:
 - YESSES – check if they are still in place and that changes have happened.
 - NOES – what should be done? Put in place working agreements to address the issues with follow ups. Set up monitoring and evaluation processes.

Working with booklet has the advantage that you can maintain an overview of the large number of different choices.

Your checklist	Yes	No	Comments / Your organisation's evidence
<p>Does your organisation have a strategic plan (long term vision) that incorporates e-learning. The plan addresses the following areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we want to be as an organisation (Organisation's vision) • Where we are now (Analysis of current position) • Aims and objectives • What we need to do to get there (Development options) • Action plan (all areas of organisational activity) • Review and monitoring procedures <p>Do your staff appraisals include specific references to using e-resources?</p> <p>Which of these does your organisation use for internal communications?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital noticeboard • Email • Newsletter • Web site • Social media 			
<p>Does the organisation have a "repository" – for example this could be a shared folder or Dropbox, GDrive etc - that can store e-learning (courses or objects)? It can be an organisation's own or shared resource or shared with other institutions)</p> <p>Are these courses or objects able to be retrieved and reused?</p> <p>Are staff encouraged to share their resources with others either contractually or through informal agreements?</p> <p>Does it use public shared repositories such as Youtube, Facebook, Tumblr, Flickr etc?</p> <p>Does the organisation use Creative Commons or something like it? * Creative Commons is a licencing agreement for the sharing of software. This is US based but has a range of licences to cover most needs.</p> <p>See http://creativecommons.org/choose/</p> <p>There are pros and cons to using Creative Commons (it has a US bias in its legal form).</p> <p>See http://webdesign.about.com/od/copyright/a/creativ_commons.htm</p>			

Your checklist	Yes	No	Comments / Your organisation's evidence
<p>Does your organisation have awareness raising development opportunities provided for staff? Can you evidence these?</p> <p>Are staff able to acquire skills for the development of e-resources through a range of learning methodologies such as : informal learning from others, planned training programmes? Can you provide evidence of the content of such learning and evaluation by participants?</p> <p>Are staff provided with technical assistance and pedagogical assistance to use e-resources on an on-going basis? Can you demonstrate how this is provided?</p> <p>Do learners and staff evaluate the use of e-resources?</p> <p>Is the evidence kept to improve their use?</p>			
<p>Do you have an operational plan that focuses on the development of e-resources?</p> <p>Does this plan contains information/policies regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to the Internet • Access to professional software • Using the organisation's ICT equipment for instruction in the organisation • Security issues (data security and privacy) • Sharing e-resources with internal staff • Sharing e-resources with external partners <p>Does your organisation have a development plan that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • procurement of digital devices and equipment for teaching and learning? • procurement of specialised professional software for use in teaching and learning? <p>Does your school/organisation allocate resources for e-learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time in the teachers' workload for the development and administration of e-learning? • Is the amount of time adjusted to the percentage of e-training provided by the organisation? • Is the time provided by the organisation, for the development of e-learning, structurally embedded in the contract/timetable? • Do teachers/trainers have a specific budget available for the realisation of e-resources? • Is this budget regularly revised and adapted to the actual needs? 			

Your checklist

Yes

No

Comments / Your organisation's evidence

Are there staff in your organisation or department responsible for the procurement, maintenance and repair of the digital infrastructure, equipment and software?

	Procurement	Maintenance	Repair
Digital infrastructure			
Equipment			
Software			

Does your organisation provide technical support for teachers during:

- the organisation of online course (access rights, back up, editing rights, accounts)
- preparation of digital education resources
- facilitation and communication
- assessment
- building online courses (filling out the course structure with content)

Does your organisation provide technical support for students when they use technology specific for VET?

Does your organisation provide facilities with multimedia tools/equipment where trainers/trainers can develop digital resources?

Can teachers/trainers rely on :

- well skilled technical staff?
- dedicated staff to help them with pedagogical questions or implementations?

Are teachers/trainers in your organisation provided with training for the use of ICT in instruction in terms of:

- technical skills
 - audio
 - video
 - web 2.0 tools
 - LMS (learner management systems)
 - collaborative tools
 - other (please specify)

Your checklist	Yes	No	Comments / Your organisation's evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • didactical skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-moderating / e-coaching • instructional design • e-assessment • development of pedagogical resources • quality control • versioning • other (please specify) <p>Is there a quality control of the created e-resources at every level of design, testing and implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. colleagues b. learners 			
<p>Do the created learning objects¹ have clear and succinct instructions for reuse?</p> <p>Are the created learning objects made for diverse learning experiences?</p> <p>Do you create learning objects to be used in multiple courses?</p> <p>Do you create learning objects appropriate for your end users bandwidth?</p> <p>Can users reassemble objects in ways that best support their learning requirements?</p> <p>Are resources shared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • across systems? • amongst colleagues? • amongst external partners? <p>Do you use a standard template² in your organisation?</p> <p>Does your organisation use a standard that can easily be used on several platforms/Learning Management Systems?</p> <p>Is there a procedure in place that helps to log and retrieve all data – for example learning objects in TAGS?</p> <p>Is this procedure automated?</p> <p>Is there a system in place for versioning?</p> <p>Is the organisation aware of (and has it) a policy for ownership/copyright of e-resources?</p> <p>Are e-courses developed based on small learning objects that can be reused by others or in the future for other courses?</p> <p>Created e-resources on the system (or in the „repository“) are open to all approved users?</p>			

¹ Learning object = any digital resource that supports learning, can be reused in different contexts and across systems, has an indefinite shelf life, and can be accessed by the learner regardless of location or learning environment.

² Template = a standardised format with same style, font, approach,...

Your checklist	Yes	No	Comments / Your organisation's evidence
<p>In terms of interactivity, there are potentially technical issues around connectivity and the resultant speed of broadband in multi-centre organisations. Are you aware of average download and upload speeds in your organisation? If so what are they?</p> <p>What levels of interactivity are in your e-resources?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passive or no interaction known as “page turners”. • Limited interaction with links to other resources, simple exercises, audio and video. • Moderate interactivity – very much the industry norm with animation, customised audio, complex simulations and scenarios. • Simulation and/or games based learning <p>Are learners encouraged to post/publish a story that highlights some area of activity and ask for responses (community reporting)?</p> <p>Are there facilities for forums to encourage interactivity and help build a community?</p> <p>Are Learners encouraged, maybe through a system of prompts, to suggest developments for the resources and participation in its creation?</p>			
<p>Does the institution have a policy of trying to source Open Source software in preference to full commercial software?</p> <p>Can examples be found within the Institution?</p> <p>Do you have a partnership with open source companies for support. If Yes, can you evidence them?</p> <p>There are many, many Open Source software programmes available on the net. But as discussed in the other areas above care needs to be taken to ensure that over technical issues such as interoperability, pedagogical approaches, organisational and personal constraints.</p> <p>The EU Leonardo da Vinci programme provides a vast range of freely available software and support from its own repository made up from other European projects.</p> <p>See Adam database: http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/homepageView.htm#.UacdF0C1GBI</p>			

ACTION

When you have completed the checklist

Once you have completed the checklist you'll have an overview of the criteria already achieved in the organisation and those which are still on the list.

An action checklist is something to work on inside your organisation. In order to have a successful effort, the following elements are worth considering:

- Share and communicate the aims, objectives, the work and the results throughout the organisation.
- It may sound obvious but focus on the e-learning activities. Do not be distracted
- It is not just the number of yeses that indicate whether you are a sustainable e-learning organisation. Some questions are more important than others but you need to highlight those in the context of your organisations (for example, the availability of the internet or size of bandwidth).
- Above all remember that this should be used to open the discussion in your organisation not to provide definitive answers. It will help highlight the key issues.
- Adopt a “Nibble” strategy. Do not go for Big Wins but address, initially, those areas which can be most easily and effectively changed. Start small and build.

Good luck!

THIS CHECKLIST WAS CREATED WITHIN THE SUSTAINVET-PROJECT BY BE-ODL AND MRS WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF PROJECT PARTNERS



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