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Quality Forum: 8 October 2015

LINKING MODES OF DELIVERY WITH CRITERIA

Purpose of presentation

- The purpose of this presentation is to provide guidelines and recommend practices for selecting the mode of provisioning
- To assist users interpreting existing HEQC criteria for distance education
- The presentation provides a structured engagement with **actual examples derived from practice** to increase your confidence when submitting such programmes in the future – focusing on distance mode of delivery



GUIDANCE

- **key distinctions** between distance and contact education provision
- **Interpretation** of the accreditation criteria and minimum in a DE context and variations thereof.
- Present **examples of good practice** in distance education




Private vs public institutions

- Major growth in three-year diploma programmes
- Growth in application for DE mode of delivery



What is a programme?

A programme is a general **overall plan** of the content that the institution should offer a student to qualify him/her for entrance into a professional or vocational field



This is a



Programm

- i. It is coherent
- ii. It is logical
- iii. It is intellectually credible
- iv. It contains a balance between theory & practice
- v. It is relevant
- vi. It can articulate with others



Typical pitfalls:

- The 'borrowed' curriculum
- Structuring the programme around personalities
- Unit standards as point of departure
- Sanitizing existing programmes
- Alignment with the HEQSF



Quality Assurance: key challenges to be addressed

- Many challenges are faced in terms of enhancing the quality of delivery
- Difficulty of students sharing their experiences with other students
- Providing opportunities to interact with lecturers outside of normal hours
- Providing timely and appropriate interactive learning materials
- Feedback on materials

Technology change

- Pace of **technology and globalisation** – increase in sources of information – therefore lecturers not the sole content authority for teaching learning interaction.
- **Roles and responsibilities** of lecturers & students support have changed
- Supporting **ICTs** open up many possibilities – but must be a design issue.
- Students also changed – self-directed **independent study, greater collaboration and engagement.**

Influence

- Programme, curriculum and learning design
academic staff professional development,
literacies of the target students, access to the
course, student support and context and
environment and available ICT infrastructure.
- ICT should support the teaching and learning
process and not drive it.

Mode of provisioning

- Regardless of mode of provisioning – all programmes should **meet the same minimum criteria** but some need to be **interpreted differently or additionally** for distance provisioning.
- Currently policy distinguishes **only two modes of provisioning for accreditation and funding** – contact or distance model

Distance mode of provisioning

- **Geographic location of students** should inform the ways in which learning experiences are designed, mediated, assessed and reviewed.
- DE provisioning can **reach larger number** and cater for **more diverse** student needs and can be more **cost effective**
- But, if not planned properly can also not be cost-effective.
- DE added layer of complexity i.t.o. **planning and management**

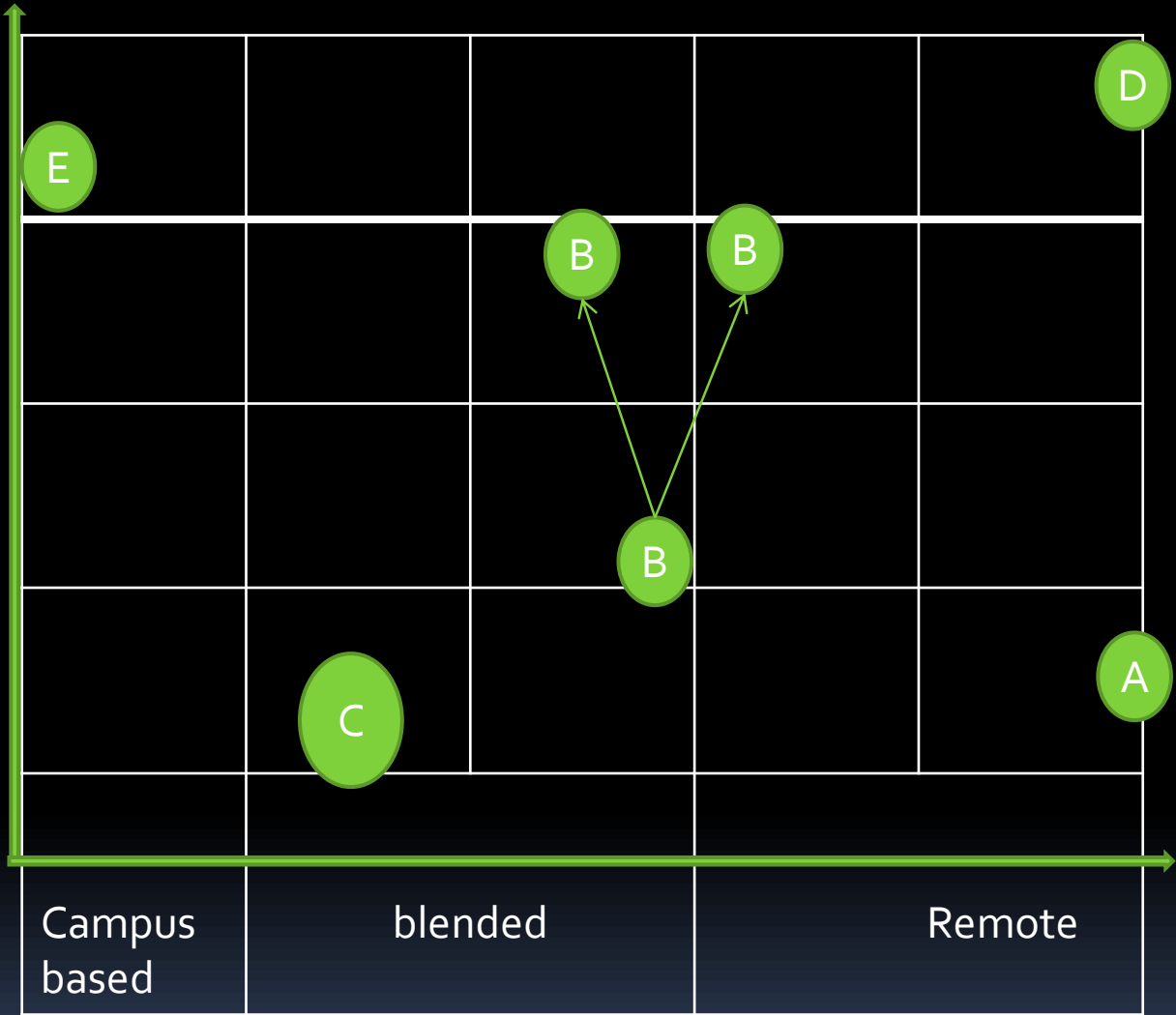


**"When I was a student, wireless data transmission
meant passing notes in class"**

Distance education

- Concerned with the **design of the programme** and the **learning experience**
- Focuses on learning design for and the implementation of teaching, learning, support and assessment, with or without supporting technology

Fully online
Internet-dependant
Internet-supported
Digitally supported
Fully offline



- DE not necessarily requiring teachers and students to be in the same place at the same time.
- Distance education focuses on **learning design for, and implementation of, teaching, learning, support and assessment** – with or without supporting technology – that aim to provide educational opportunities to students who are not physically 'on site'.

- Even if registration requirements stipulate that students must have specific ICT devices and skills and specific levels of connectivity, it is necessary **to think about how distributed students can gain access to technical support** (e.g. online support or call centres)
- important **design questions about what examples to use, what resources to refer to, the type of language that might be appropriate**, how a large and distributed student population might be divided into smaller groups for collaborative assignments (perhaps deliberately pairing students from different environments), and what learning styles and strategies might be appropriate (perhaps a greater range of options for a more diverse range of participants).



- Distance provision aims to create a *quality learning environment* using an appropriate **combination of different learning resources, tutorial support, peer group discussion, and practical sessions** (real or virtual or a combination of both)

Key challenges

- Key challenges of distance learners to be addressed by a provider include overcoming the difficulty of students **sharing their experiences with other students**; providing **opportunities to interact with teachers outside of normal hours**; providing timely and appropriate interactive learning materials and feedback on assessment; and making available expert guidance and support in order to derive maximum benefit from the **learning materials**. Many of these traditional challenges can be addressed through appropriate use of suitable supporting digital technologies but only if the integration of technology is designed for purpose, and the impact on students, staff and systems is taken into account and provided for.

target

- the **physical location of students** and their **access to appropriate resources** and technology remain important considerations in the design of programmes.
- the **size of the cohort enrolled** for a course or programme would appear to be a major determinant of the nature and extent of the interaction

Size of cohort

- the need for the deployment of tutors, the level of mediation employed by the lecturer and tutors, the level of support for the learners, the nature of the assessment, and could in fact be the determinant for the pedagogical approach.
- the learning purpose should drive the use of ICTs and not the other way round.



Staffing

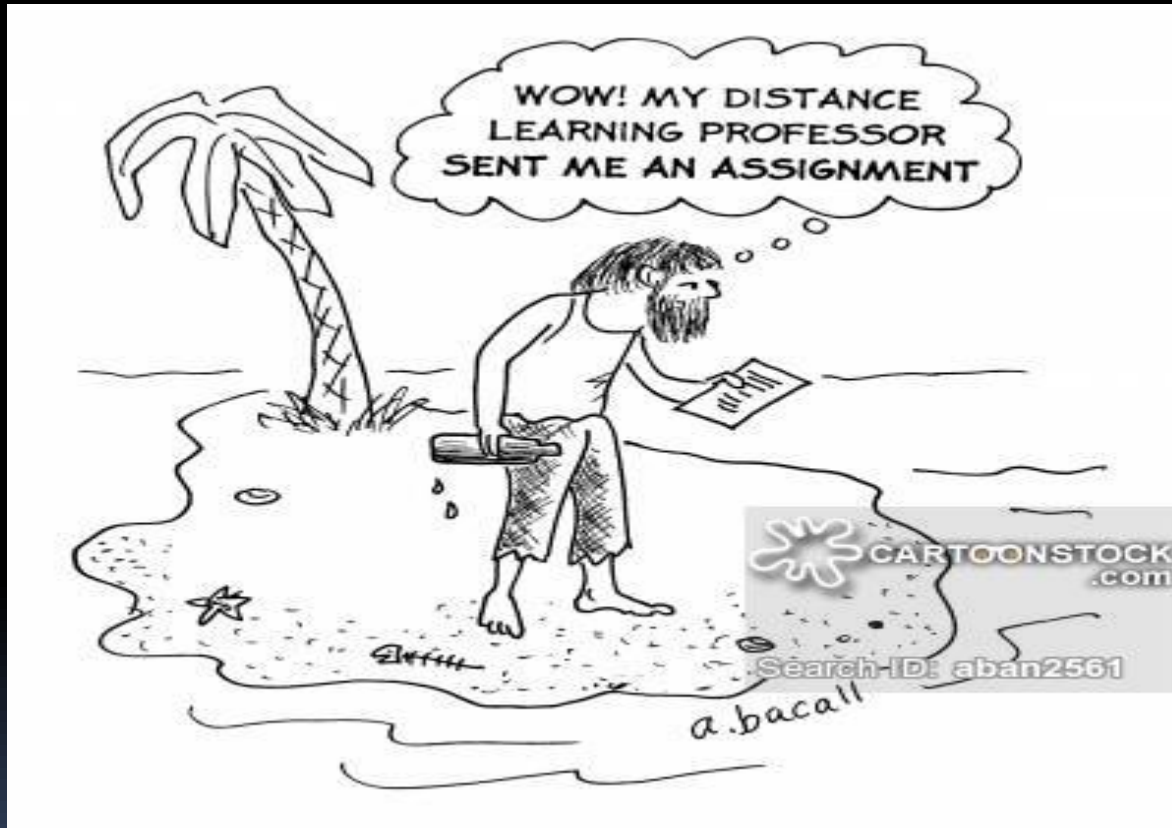
- The rapid expansion of the university sector in terms of enrolment has not been accompanied by an equivalent expansion in the **number of academics**. This means that academic staff have experienced **increased teaching loads and high student-to-staff ratios**.

Programme Design and systems

- Stronger emphasis on curriculum issues that underpin programme design and



Student profile



Curriculum design and development

- We need a clear idea of the **profile of our entry-level students** in terms of their subject or disciplinary competences, their fundamental learning competences and capability for independent learning, their practical and ICT skills, and their existing life and work commitments
- Deciding on the **assessment strategy** is an **essential part of the curriculum** planning process.

- Decisions about assessment will have to be made concurrently with materials design and development.
- a detailed preparation of the curriculum and strategy for the programme, which involves a good deal of consultation, between the academic unit and the service departments such as media, printing and/or ICT, and learner support, to explore the technical possibilities and the implications of the curriculum intentions.

Criterion 1: Programme Design



Intended Student Profile



- Appropriately designed learning resources
- Decentralised support & assessment
- Distributed communication & interaction systems



Assessment Strategy



(for pacing and feedback for

- Appropriate for intended learning outcomes
- Split between formative and summative
- Regular opportunity for formative assessment (improvement)
- Management of Work Integrated Learning



Credit Analysis



- Credit ratings are appropriate
- Programme is coherent
- Fundamental, core & elective components
- Pre- and co-requisites
- Clear articulation



Supporting Documents



- Policy and Budget for Materials Development
- Outline of courses and modules in programme
- SAQA Submission
- List of Readings (appropriate and up to date)
- Student placement – agreement with workplaces

Criterion 5: Teaching & Learning Strategy

Related Criteria

- 1: Programme Design
- 2: Student Recruitment, Selection & Admission
- 12: Teaching & Learning Interactions
- 6,13,14: Assessment



Notional Learning Hours

- Full time: 30 hours x 40 weeks = 1200 hours/year
- Part-time: 12-15 hours x 40 weeks = 600 hours/year
- Most distance students take 1.5 -3 times minimum duration



Progress and Assessment

- Systems to monitor student progress
- Timeframes for student assignment feedback
- Student support for those who fail a semester
- Staff development for assessment



Curriculum Review

- Time scheduled for updating
- Up-to-date references and weblinks
- Learning and assessment demands match level of qualification
- Benchmarking process



Staffing Complement

- Numbers of assignments to mark and materials to distribute
- Translation of materials into other languages
- Support for students in other countries
- Provision of work integrated learning placements
- Availability over evenings or weekends for support



Learning Materials & Support

- Learners only start when RECEIVE materials
- Either dispatched materials or required connectivity
- Required levels of interaction e.g. email, discussions
- ICT facilities can cope with increased enrolments



Criterion 6,13,14: Assessment

Formative Assessment to Avoid

- Assignments that do not count or are optional
- Assignments self-assessed against generic sheets
- Only examinations count
- Feedback received only after examination



Student Assessment

- Align to Teaching and Learning Strategy
- Policies to ensure assessment valid & reliable
- Role of formative assessment
- Requirements and evidence needed for RPL



Appropriate Assessment

- Fit for target audience
- Link to Programme Design
- Staff capacity
- Systems to mitigate against cheating
- Guidance on plagiarism



External Bodies

- External moderators for exit-level modules
- Role of professional bodies





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