# A Quick Checklist for Course Quality

**Faculty Member Name:**

**Course Title:**

## 1. Course Overview & Introduction

This section focuses on the overall design of the course, and how it is made clear to the learner at the beginning of the course. The course overview and introduction set the tone for the course, let learners know what to expect, and provide guidance to ensure learners get off to a good start. Learners should also be able to easily navigate the course site and know how to access support services.

**Hint:** Look for this information on a “Start Here” page, a “Home” page, and/or in the syllabus!

- Instructor introduction
- Syllabus is easy to find on the site
- Getting Started guide/Start Here page
- Clearly explained expectations and policies for:
  - Discussion (how often to post, length, description of “good” post
  - Late work
  - Assignment submission (length, file type, formatting, etc.)
- Course navigation is consistent and easy to use
- Students are told where to access course materials
- Syllabus includes links to course technology accessibility statements
- Formatting supports readability (ie. headers, consistent fonts, sizes, organization, etc.)
- Description and links are provided for support services
  - Academic
  - Technical support
  - Student support (CAPS, Health, etc.)
  - Disability Services

## 2. Learning Objectives

Learning objectives or competencies describe what learners will be able to do upon completion of the course. The learning objectives or competencies establish a foundation upon which the rest of the course is based.

**Hint:** To determine whether an objective is measurable, ask yourself “How will I know if students have achieved this?” If it seems that it would be difficult to quantify, it is not measurable.

- Course Level objectives listed prominently in the course (not just Syllabus)
- Module Level objectives listed at the start of each module/week
- Objectives written in simple language, from the perspective of the learner
- Objectives begin with action verbs
- Objectives are measurable
### 3. Alignment: Activities, Assessment, & Instructional Materials

This section focuses on the course elements (activities, instructional materials) that will enable learners to meet the course objectives, as well as assess the degree to which they have met them. Assessment should implemented in a manner that corresponds to the course learning objectives, and also allows learners to track their learning progress throughout the course. Students should also be able to access all course materials and activities regardless of disability.

**Hint:** Look for a link between the objective and the kind of assessment being used to measure it. For example, if the objective is to “Explain X concept”, an essay or short answer quiz would be a better fit than a multiple choice test, because a multiple choice test does not give learners an opportunity to “explain” the concept.

- Learning activities contribute to the achievement of the learning objectives
- Assessments provide opportunities for students to demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives
  - **Note:** if objectives are not measurable, you may wish to revisit your responses in Section 2
- Clear explanation of how activities and instructional materials will prepare learners to meet the objectives
- Students are able to assess their progress throughout the course, i.e. self-check/practice quizzes, self-evaluations, peer review, etc.
- A mix of low- and high-stakes assessments exist
- Alternative means of access to course materials is provided
  - Video and audio materials include captions and/or transcripts
  - PDFs feature searchable text, rather than image-only scans

### 4. Learner Interaction

Learner interaction and engagement are essential elements of a successful course. Course components that promote active learning (including learner-content interaction, learner-instructor interaction, & learner-learner interaction) contribute to the learning process and to learner persistence. A clear plan for instructor feedback, and guidelines for how learners should communicate should also be evident.

**Hint:** Look for a mix of different types of interactions within modules, and information about feedback and communication guidelines in the syllabus or on a “Support and Policies” page

- Learning activities promote active learning and regular engagement
  - Learner-learner (discussion, peer review, chat)
  - Learner-content (readings, videos, materials)
  - Learner-instructor (ex. instructor feedback, announcements)
- Learners know the criteria to be used for grading their work
  - Learners know when to expect grading and feedback from the instructor
- Guidelines for online interaction are clearly stated
  - Online communication etiquette
- Technology tools (both inside & outside the LMS) promote engagement and active learning