

How to address e-learning in the work of the QA agencies?

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Point of view

- Norwegian Agency for Digital Learning in Higher Education
- Agency under the Ministry of Education and Research
- Mission: stimulate exploration and use of digital technology in the HE sector in order to promote quality in pedagogical practices and student learning, we:
 - fund institutional projects that explore innovative technology enhanced educational practices
 - maintain knowledge base on educational uses of technology
 - advise the Ministry of Education, the HEIs, and other sector stakeholders
 - collaborate with other agencies such as the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, NOKUT



Norwegian Agency
for Digital Learning
in Higher Education

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Some remarks on e-learning

- Digitisation as a key driver of change
- e-learning as part of the digitisation of HE
- Innovative pedagogy and educational quality
- Complex landscape
 - Study models:
 - campus
 - multi-campus
 - distributed
 - wholly web-based
 - Heterogeneous learner population
 - from campus students to lifelong learners
 - from freshmen to adult working life professionals
- Distribution channel -> means to exploration innovative pedagogy



Some remarks on e-learning, cont.

- Task: to explore and exploit digitisation in its various forms to orchestrate and qualitatively enhance the student learning process in this multifaceted landscape
- Two areas to concentrate on:
 - subject matter relevance
 - activities motivated by pedagogy / theories about learning
- Rationale in both areas is to contribute to learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and abilities) and it should be evaluated correspondingly – same criterion by which other elements in learning designs are assessed
- Question to ask: Do digital tools and media (e-learning) as part of a particular learning design contribute to learning outcomes?



What to look for

- e-learning offerings subject to the same quality assurance as non-e offerings; involve all the same elements, but in a different mix
- E-learning QA emergent field, examples of guidelines:
 - EADTU *E-xcellence: Quality Assessment for E-learning: a Benchmarking Approach*
 - Swedish National Agency for Higher Education *E-learning Quality Aspects and Criteria for Evaluation of e-learning in Higher Education*
- Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education accreditation guidelines for e-learning
- Norwegian Agency for Digital Learning in Higher Education tri-annual qualitative study on the state of digitisation
- A selection of criteria, potential web-site

What to look for: Strategic level

- Institutional vision for teaching and learning that gives teaching and learning a strategic role that equals that of research
- Strategic role of digitisation / e-learning in the institution's quality enhancement efforts
- “Research-like” approach to teaching and learning
- Stimulate by way of career paths and other incentives
- Coordinated set of support functions to support the operative level that also supports the strategic level
 - Pedagogical support
 - Learning technology support
 - Media production support

Advice: Strategic level, cont.

- Technical and physical infrastructure
- Institution-wide infrastructure for digital assessment
- Develop digital literacy among faculty and students, as well as for educational leadership and decision-makers
- Coordinated educational leadership at all levels to help all of the above to play together



Advice: Operative level

- Assess faculty as much on their innovation in teaching as on their innovation in research
- Explore and exploit digital tools and media in the design and teaching of study programs in order to strengthen and develop active learning methods
- Foster an academic culture of mutual sharing and peer review in teaching
- Refine and share the experiences of local enthusiasts so that the institution becomes a learning organization
- Make sure that digital learning and assessment methods are motivated by learning outcome and anchored in course and program descriptions



Conclusion

- The above factors constitute success criteria of various kinds and at various levels that are all crucial in both internal and external quality assessment of e-learning
- Learning designs that include e-learning have to be evaluated with respect to how digital tools and media contribute to learning and assessment methods and learning outcomes
- E-learning should be an integrated part of the continuously on-going quality enhancement efforts



Thank you!

Questions? Comments?