

March 2023 (version 2)

Distance online delivery

The aim is to provide general support and advice to tertiary education organisations (TEOs) where the mode of delivery is *distance online*. The following information does not address:

- Transnational/offshore delivery through an offshore partner institute (either face to face/ blended or correspondence)
- Distance delivery via correspondence

For the purposes of this document, the mode of delivery *distance online* is defined as:

Delivery through an online learning management system [LMS] which may include but is not limited to webinars / virtual lectures (recorded or live), online tutorials and discussions (synchronous or asynchronous), individual and group work (synchronous or otherwise via online fora and chats).

(Note: in some literature and jurisdictions, it is also referred as *digital learning, e-learning, remote learning, online learning, web-based learning, extramural or virtual learning*).

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There are seven key areas to consider and below are some evaluative questions addressing different aspects of distance delivery via an online platform.

Strategic Direction A long term vision for distance delivery must guide current practice and establish a common goal. These practices and goals should be reflected through relevant policies and procedures particularly relating to distance online (onshore/offshore). Establishing a culture that values innovation in teaching and learning through technology requires influence from senior management and needs to be established before delivery is undertaken.		
Questions		What is considered good evidence? <i>Examples.</i>
What is the organisational strategy and policy for distance online delivery?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods Rule 4.1 Criterion 5 Regulations Rule 4.1 Criterion 7 Programme Review & Rule 7.1 Criteria 2 and 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic or other key documents indicating a long-term vision for distance online delivery and provision to support the programme / training scheme. Comprehensive set of relevant QMS policies and procedures, which should include for example details on <i>distance online delivery – onshore / offshore, assessment policies for online delivery, resources, staffing, curriculum design, student support for online delivery.</i>
Is there a dedicated leadership position to monitor and manage distance delivery of programmes?	Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CVs of the key staff demonstrating prior experience of designing and delivering learning through an online platform. Staff professional development plans demonstrating commitment to online pedagogy.

<p>How has the organisation decided that the distance delivery mode is appropriate for the targeted student body?</p> <p>What evidence has been gathered to demonstrate that the learning and support needs of distance online learners are sufficiently understood/ addressed?</p>	<p>Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources</p> <p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 4 Acceptability of the programme and consultation</p> <p>Rule 7.1 Criterion 4 Programme Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic plans and other key documents demonstrating clear purpose, planning and sustainability. • Self-assessment report demonstrating strengths and areas for improvement to deliver online learning. • Summary of consultation with key stakeholders demonstrating relevance and need for online delivery. • Need analysis demonstrating understanding of the learning and support needs of the target student body and how these are addressed. • Ongoing review and monitoring reports indicating there is an effective process for ensuring currency and monitoring of the outcomes for students and stakeholders (when submitting change application).
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Financial and physical resources

For online distance delivery, sufficient funding in terms of financial and physical resources, and on going investment in the electronic learning is essential. Virtual learning environment should be based on pedagogical considerations and supported by the institution's technical infrastructure.

Questions		What is considered good evidence? <i>Examples.</i>
Do learners have access to relevant digital resources such as e-journals, conference databases, etc.?	Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of resources demonstrating capabilities to support delivery through an online platform. Components (courses/modules) contain adequate information to access digital resources. Programme / training scheme handbook providing sufficient information on digital library.
Are there provisions in budgets and forecasts for ongoing investment in technical infrastructure to support online and blended learning?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A statement of commitment from TEO. Strategic plans and other key documents demonstrating clear purpose, planning and sustainability.
Are there agreements with Distributed Resource Centres for external testing or invigilating elements of the curriculum that requires trained face-to-face assessors or exams?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 5 Regulations Rule 4.1 Criterion 7 Programme Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sample MOU / Agreement to demonstrate comprehensive and appropriate availability of specific resources to effectively and sustainably provide delivery. Relevant policies and procedures demonstrating that the TEO has effective processes to monitor formal arrangements.
What platform/technology/resources have been selected and how do these serve to deliver the curriculum?	Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods Rule 4.1 Criterion 6 Assessment and Moderation Rule 4.1 Criterion 7 Programme Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of a widely-internationally-recognised learning management system (LMS) with full subscription. A temporary login for NZQA to determine the features and capability of the LMS.

<p>How have issues of privacy, information sharing, copyright and intellectual property obligations etc been addressed?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff/assessor manual (includes guidelines for using the LMS).• Student handbook outlining privacy, information sharing, copyright and intellectual property obligations.• Staff manual outlining ethical obligations for staff regarding learners' privacy and relevant policies on copyright and intellectual property.
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Curriculum design and delivery

The curriculum design and pedagogical models must be appropriate for online delivery. The instructional design and delivery needs to consider: target learners, where to study (location), when to study (time), study period (duration), study pace (full time/ part time), adaptation of methods to disabled people, number of enrolments, individual studies and/or group based studies, practical components (e.g., laboratory courses, practicum or workplace immersions, project based activities). Strategies for fair, flexible and pedagogically justified learning activities and assessments should be clearly established and communicated and issues of privacy, copyright and other legal matters need to be considered and managed.

Questions		What is considered good evidence? <i>Examples.</i>
<p>Will the programme be provided through Face-to-Face and/or blended delivery as well as by <i>distance online</i>?</p> <p>Is the programme currently being delivered through face-to-face and/or blended delivery mode?</p> <p>If yes, then what changes have been proposed to the existing content to suit distance online delivery and ensure meeting the requirements of the current approved delivery modes?</p> <p>What discipline specific concerns have had to be addressed in the instructional design and development?</p>	<p>Part 6 Changes to approved programmes</p> <p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 2 Title, aims, Learning outcomes and coherence</p> <p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original programme application document – with tracked changes. • Revised mapping matrix (learning outcomes that map to the qualification(s) graduate profile). • Delivery schedule (outlining activities / topics and distribution of the learning hours – including both on campus and distance if applicable). • The application document provides a description of discipline specific concerns and how these have been addressed.
<p>Do the components reflect a balance of pedagogical approaches and technical design (interactive and engaging)?</p>	<p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 1 Qualification to which the programme leads</p> <p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods</p> <p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 4 Acceptability of the programme and consultation</p> <p>Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed component descriptors outlining the learning outcomes, learning activities / topics and assessment methods suited for online delivery. • A description of the TEO's pedagogical philosophy.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of consultation with relevant stakeholders which is reflected in the component descriptors.
Are the learning outcomes suitable for online delivery?	<p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 2 Title, aims, Learning outcomes and coherence</p> <p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed component descriptors outlining the learning outcomes, learning activities / topics and assessment methods suited for online delivery.
What is the distribution of learning hours, duration of each component and procedure to ensure learning hours are met?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A delivery plan / schedule indicating duration of the components and activities (topics) taking into account the distribution of the learning hours. Indicative intake plan outlining sequence of component delivery.
<p>What mechanisms will be in place for learners to work collaboratively to achieve learning outcomes as required?</p> <p>How will student engagement be maintained and monitored throughout the delivery of the component, including peer-to-peer interaction?</p>	<p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods</p> <p>Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A description of how the learning activities on the LMS have been designed to enable and facilitate collaboration. Student Handbook / Programme handbook or E-Learning manual outlines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contact information of tutors and student support services Setup of the LMS to facilitate engagement Specific provision for Maori and Pasifika students Attendance requirements
How are learners informed about the criteria (component expectations) that will be used to evaluate their participation in online activities such as discussion groups?	<p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods</p> <p>PAA Rule 4.1 Criterion 6 Assessment and moderation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme handbook outlining instructions for the students relating to participation and the criteria and/or assessment details. The application document provides description

		of formative assessments and learning activities.
<p>How are the components setup in the LMS?</p> <p>Is the component (course/module) content available from the beginning of the programme or is it progressive over the duration of the component?</p>	<p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods</p> <p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 6 Assessment and moderation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-learning manual provides a comprehensive description of the setup of the LMS.
<p>Are there compulsory synchronous (real time) learning activities? If so, how will they be managed? Is there an alternative arrangement for learners who cannot participate?</p>	<p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A delivery schedule or weekly planner outlines the number and hours of compulsory synchronous sessions. The component descriptors indicating the compulsory synchronous learning activities for each component.
<p>What are the feedback mechanisms for learners?</p>	<p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Handbook defines clear feedback mechanisms relating to academic and pastoral support. Programme or student handbook outlines the pastoral and academic related feedback mechanisms for the students.

Assessments and moderation

An assessment is a measure of a learner's achievement and progress in relation to component learning outcomes therefore a combination of formative and summative assessments is essential. The assessment design and methodologies must be appropriate for online delivery.

A range of policies and mechanisms to ensure that assessment tasks for learners studying online are clearly communicated and effectively moderated. In e learning, flexibility in terms of time and location offers the possibility of enhancing creativity, and critical thinking but at the same time entails problems of security and authentication.

Procedures and regulations should be in place to verify the student's identity and authenticity of each individual student's contribution at the point of assessment. Avenues for student feedback about the programme need to be clearly provided.

Questions		What is considered good evidence? <i>Examples.</i>
<p>How are the assessments suitable for the online learning environment?</p> <p>How is equity of assessments ensured with face to face delivery?</p> <p>How will the learners be informed about the assessments and requirements?</p> <p>Is the marking and submission of the assessments undertaken through the LMS?</p>	<p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 6 Assessment and moderation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed component descriptors outlining the learning outcomes, learning activities / topics and assessment methods suited for online delivery. • A description of how equity of assessments will be ensured. • Formal arrangements with employers or host organisations) demonstrate a planned approach relating to organising practicum or work placements. • Assessment guidelines in the programme handbook or on the LMS assist students by providing detailed information (for example, how to submit, when to expect results and feedback, whether resubmission or reassessment opportunities are available). • Assessment schedule indicating indicative dates/period of submission. • Assessment policies evidenced through QMS or student handbook demonstrate academic standards and procedures are adequate.

<p>How will authenticity of student work be ascertained and guaranteed, particularly at the point of assessment?</p>	<p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 6 Assessment and moderation Rule 7.1 Criterion 1 Assessment and moderation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment methods that discourage cheating are present in the mix (for example, controlled/invigilated, individualised, oral presentations, reflections). • Learners are required to complete a short tutorial/module re academic integrity before proceeding to the first component of the programme. • Penalties for academic misconduct are communicated to students in plain English in the programme handbook or on the LMS. • LMS has the following information/ explanation to ensure authenticity of student work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Software used for text-matching that compares student's written work with other electronic texts from a variety of sources ○ Academic writing style guide, including referencing requirements.
<p>How will you support academic integrity, including preventing contract cheating?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic integrity policy and procedures are outlined in the programme/student handbook or on the LMS.
<p>What are the arrangements for management of pre and post assessment moderation?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies and procedures demonstrating there is an effective system for moderation of assessment materials and decisions. • Annual moderation plan/schedule demonstrating a planned approach reflecting the moderation policies. • List of existing or potential external moderation partners (other TEOs or contractors) to ensure consistency and benchmarking of the outcomes.

Staffing

Workloads and a shift in working hours for staff have to be taken into account. The development of interactive content and online lectures require special resources as well as copyright regulations. Online delivery requires specific skill sets for teaching staff that differ from traditional face to face teaching, including appropriate technological and communications skills and resources.

Questions		What is considered good evidence? <i>Examples.</i>
Are staff adequately supported and professionally developed to teach, develop resources and support learners in an online learning environment?	Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources Rule 4.1 Criterion 5 Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CVs of the key staff demonstrating prior experience of designing and delivering learning through an online platform. • Staff professional development plans demonstrating commitment to online pedagogy. • Tutor job descriptions identify essential experience and skills in designing and delivering learning through an online platform. • A description of investment in online professional development and planned improvements in staff expertise in teaching online.
How will technical support be provided to staff and learners?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the current infrastructure of the IT department to demonstrate adequate provision of technical support to the student. • Description of the budgets allocated for professional development of academic and technical support staff. • E-Learning Manual or other documents that demonstrate comprehensive information about features and capabilities of the LMS; enabling students to resolve basic issues through step-by-step troubleshooting.

<p>How will peer-to-peer interaction among teaching staff, and support to teaching staff will be managed and maintained when the programme is delivered wholly online?</p>	<p>Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff contracts demonstrate sufficient time allowance for student access and engagement. • Draft staff meeting schedule demonstrating peer to peer interaction for staff development.
<p>Is there dedicated teaching staff to undertake online delivery? What is the workload of a tutor undertaking delivery via online? What is the staff (tutor and technical staff) to student ratio?</p>	<p>Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the indicative teaching workload matrix to demonstrate adequate time allowance for programme development, student support, professional development and administration. • Details of the number of staff proposed to undertake delivery to demonstrate adequate staff to student ratio.

Support (student and staff)

Clear information about the programme and technical requirements at the beginning of the studies will facilitate students in deciding suitability. Support should encompass more than technical issues for both student and staff. Pastoral care and study skills support is essential to enable and deliver a holistic learning experience.

Technical, administrative and educational support should be available throughout the programme.

Questions	Programme Approval, Recognition, and Accreditation Rules 2022	What is considered good evidence? <i>Examples.</i>
Do prospective learners have enough information to decide if online study is suited to their needs?	Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources Rule 4.1 Criterion 5 Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolment information (TEO website / Prospectus) sets out the minimum technical system requirements and outlines the requirements/time commitments for learners and specific provision for Māori and Pasifika learners.
How is student orientation undertaken?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 5 Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Handbook / LMS platform providing front-end information. Relevant policies and procedures (i.e. student admission or recruitment).
How are learners guided to use online tools and virtual spaces appropriately?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 5 Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-learning Manual/video tutorials provide detailed information on features and capabilities of the LMS. Staff handbook (relevant information on how staff will facilitate support to learners).
Are learners able to get technical support for their own devices, should they require it?	Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-Learning Manual demonstrates comprehensive information about features and capabilities of the LMS; enabling students to resolve basic issues through step-by-step troubleshooting. Student Handbook provides detailed information about the support services and contact details.

<p>How is pastoral care of distance online learners provided and managed?</p> <p>What student services and study skill support are provided to the learners?</p>	<p>Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student handbook or E-Learning Manual provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Detailed information about the support services, contact details and other relevant policies and procedures. ○ description of how international learners access English language support and study skills (time management, referencing, etc). ○ description of orientation to new study approaches. ○ Specific provision for Māori and Pasifika learners. ○ Details relating to cultural support 'spaces' such as dedicated chatrooms.
<p>How are learners informed about online behaviour and etiquette?</p> <p>What considerations have been made for learners with disability issues?</p>	<p>Rule 7.1 Criterion 2 Resources</p> <p>Rule 4.1 Criterion 5 Regulations</p>	<p>Student handbook or E-Learning Manual provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guidelines for online student behaviour and etiquette to foster positive interaction and reduce misuse of the technology / platform. • Description of the features and tools available in the LMS to facilitate learners with disability.

Quality assurance

Review and continuous improvement are integral and like any other delivery mode, online delivery will require regular detailed reviews.

Questions	Programme Approval, Recognition, and Accreditation Rules 2022	What is considered good evidence? <i>Examples.</i>
What process or procedures are in place for reviewing and developing programme/training scheme, teaching and learning and assessment for distance online delivery?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 7 Programme Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies and procedures to demonstrate effective compliance management practices. • Ongoing review and monitoring reports indicating there is an effective process for ensuring currency and monitoring of the outcomes for students and stakeholders.
What process is followed to take feedback from learners and tutors?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 6 Assessment and Moderation Rule 4.1 Criterion 7 Programme Review	
What is the procedure for ensuring the academic records are kept as per Rule 6.1 PTE Enrolment and Academic Records Rules 2022	Rule 4.1 Criterion 7 Programme Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies and procedures to demonstrate effective compliance management practices. • Risk assessment plan to demonstrate a planned approach to mitigate potential risks. • A self-assessment report identifying strengths and weakness and an action plan to address the weaknesses.
Oversight of key risks to operations in an online delivery context, security of the TEO's information system, including risks to academic integrity - how this will be reported, and acted upon?		
What mechanisms are in place to identify learners who are, or may be at risk? (disability, dropping out etc)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies and procedures to demonstrate effective process relating to identifying and minimising barriers to learning.
How will the TEO demonstrate graduates of programmes leading to New Zealand qualifications meet the requirements for consistency?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation of how the TEO will monitor and assure the consistency of qualification achievement by students.

The following aspects should be considered if programme delivery includes learners located outside New Zealand.

Mode of delivery: distance online outside New Zealand only		
Questions	Programme Approval, Recognition, and Accreditation Rules 2022	What is considered good evidence? <i>Examples.</i>
Are the teaching and learning resources and practical examples embedded in teaching materials suited for the multi-cultural and multi-national audience?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 2 Title, aims, earning outcomes and coherence Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component descriptors demonstrating the learning and teaching appropriate for a multi-cultural audience.
Does the programme include or enable regulatory or professional registration or license in New Zealand?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 1 Qualification to which the programme leads Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualification details outline specific requirements and the application includes an explanation addressing how the qualification requirements have been addressed and suitable for the international market.
How the graduates of the programme will achieve comparable outcomes to graduates within New Zealand from the same New Zealand qualification?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 4 Acceptability of the programme and consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assessment analysis demonstrating how consistency of outcomes will be ensured.
How are the student support systems tailored to provide online learners support that is consistent with their cultural context and modes of learning?	Rule 4.1 Criterion 3 Delivery methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student or programme handbook demonstrating a comprehensive support system taking into account the wide audience.