



European Association
for Distance Learning

Minimum Quality Standards

Pre-enrolment Practices



At all times information given to potential students, either written or orally, shall be truthful and accurate. It must be clearly stated if face-to face teaching (when it takes place) is an integral part of the correspondence course, or additional to it. The minimum content of the prospectus must provide:

- the course name
- the course content (syllabus)
- the course level
- the length of the course
- the course objectives
- the study load required by the student- i.e. the study time (e.g. hours or weeks)
- qualifications (if any) that can be obtained
- internal and external examinations (if any) prepared for
- the number of examinations or assignments in the course
- the target group the course is aimed at
- the starting level required (i.e. what, if any previous qualifications are needed)
- a clear explanation of any special conditions pertinent to the institute or the country it operates in concerning the course, or the contract
- information as to whether the course material supplied is all-inclusive or if additional materials have to be purchased



Our mission is to raise the standard and credibility of distance learning across Europe.

The contract with the student must state in writing:

- the course name and the name of the institution
- the fees for the course
- the tuition and services included in the fee
- the terms of payment
- how payment is to be made
- the duration of the contract
- the conditions (if any) for cancelling the course
- terms and conditions for any refund of fees
- details of any guarantees
- a cooling-off period of at least 7 days
- who owns the copyright
- who owns the course material (the student or the institute)

Language used in the contract shall be clear and unambiguous.

A regular monitoring (at least once every 6 months) must be made of tutors' work, and of guidance and marking standards. Tutors must return scripts quickly, a maximum of 10 days in their possession. Administrative procedures must ensure scripts are sent to tutors and returned to students within 5 working days of being received by the institution. All assignments must be appropriate to the subject matter and be of real assistance (not just token) in helping students achieve their objectives. Tutor comments must always be legible. Tutors must demonstrate a real conscientious desire to help students.



Counselling practices (other than direct lesson tutorials)

There shall always be, within normal office hours, someone readily available in the institute to handle oral enquiries of a counselling nature. Communications about administrative and tutorial matters should be answered within 7 working days of receipt. Letters where a longer time-scale is required for a complete answer should be acknowledged within 3 working days, the delay explained, and an indication given of when a full answer can be expected.

Examinations

The number of examinations in a course should be clearly stated before enrolment. All internal examinations must be directly connected to the subject lessons and cover the essentials

of the lessons. Examinations must contain clear instructions and guidance on procedure.

If professional subjects are taught which lead to formal examinations then the institute's tests throughout the course must adequately prepare students by being in the same format, cover the entire syllabus and be marked to a similar standard as the formal examinations. All tests must be marked by properly qualified people. It must be made clear whether the examination leads to a qualification.

After a final examination result is declared, failures should be informed of any further options available (e.g. further study, resits etc). If the institute acts as an examination centre for formal examinations, these must be correctly

invigilated and proper examination facilities must be provided.

Face-to-face teaching

Where face-to-face teaching is an integral part of a course, the quality of all the practices above and the contractual arrangements must have the same quality for the face-to-face teaching as for the correspondence element.

Appropriate teaching facilities must be provided.

Oral information:

At least one person in the institute must be completely familiar with each course offered, and with the minimum prospectus and contract requirements as detailed above.



We work for the people of Europe, to enhance our collective skills and achievements by maximising the contribution that distance learning can make.

Enrolment and contract practices

Students should be enrolled quickly and efficiently and sent study material quickly (where appropriate). All information given by students is confidential to the institution, its employees and tutors. Accurate records of students enrolled, for which course and when, must be kept. Study material must be despatched within 7 days of receipt of an enrolment or delivered at the commencement of studies. Wrong or damaged study material must be replaced immediately. Students must be informed of any overpayment and a refund made as soon as practicable. The student must be given a copy of the terms and conditions of enrolment for his/her own records. All refunds due must be paid within 30 days.

Product management practices

Course authors must be subject specialists and given a clear brief of writing and production requirements. Courses must be appropriate to the learning levels and expectations of the target group. Course contents must be up-to-date and technically correct. Each course must contain

clear instructions on how to proceed. Courses should be clearly printed, easy to read, suitably bound and convenient to use. An institute must have a course and teaching evaluation system. The institute must have appropriate marking standards for assignments.

Tutorial Practices

There must be facility for significant two-way communication between the institute and the student. The number of assignments to be corrected by a tutor must be appropriate to the subject and length of the course. All tutors must be subject specialists. The institute must clearly state the rights and duties of tutors (e.g. pay, turnaround time etc.). Tutors must have adequate training in the ways and administrative systems of the institution. Tutors must be given proper guidance on marking standards required.

Technology-based learning

Where technology-based learning occurs (which includes the use of information and communication technology in the fields of learning, learning support and student services),

its quality must be on a par with that of the other activities of the institution.

Students must have adequate access to technology-based learning if it is obligatory. If technology-based learning is organised in addition to other learning elements, students who do not have direct access to it must be given other means of participating.

Other practices

The institution must make known to each student where to go with complaints, for further advice etc.

Complaints must be dealt with within 7 working days. Where longer time is required to investigate and deal with a complaint, acknowledgement must be given within 7 working days and the delay explained, together with an indication of when the complaint can be expected to be resolved. Members must have a sympathetic and reasonable attitude to complaints and make every effort to see that fairness is accorded to all parties.



The Premier European Organisation for Distance Learning Providers & Practitioners



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