

# The Quality Matters™ Higher Education Rubric

## Seventh Edition

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General Standard	Overview Statement
<b>General Standard 1 – Course Overview and Introduction:</b> The overall design of the course 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 other guidance to help learners succeed from the outset.

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
<b>SRS 1.1: Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.</b>	3	<p>Information posted at the beginning of the course indicates what to do first, provides a general course overview and detailed navigational instructions, and encourages the learner to explore the course site.</p> <p>Instructors may choose to incorporate some of this information in the course syllabus or other course documents. A useful feature is a “Read Me First” or “Start Here” button or icon on the course home page, linking learners to introductory information.</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p><b>Reviewers</b>, use the first visit to the course to experience what learners encounter in their first visit to the course. Look for clear directions on what to do first, where to find the syllabus or general course orientation section, and how to navigate the course. Determine whether learners are given sufficient information to begin the course with ease.</p> <p>Examples of elements to introduce learners to the course may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clearly stated explanation of how to get started in the course</li> <li>• A recorded course “tour” that demonstrates where to find various course components</li> <li>• A “scavenger hunt” or “syllabus quiz” assignment that leads learners through an exploration of the different parts of the course</li> <li>• An illustration, table, diagram, or visual representation of the course</li> </ul> <p><b>Hybrid Courses:</b> Instructions in the online course site make it clear to learners that the course is a hybrid course, with both online and face-to-face components and activities. Instructions specify the format, sequencing, and requirements for both the online and face-to-face portions of the course.</p> <p><b>Synchronous Courses:</b> Information is provided in the asynchronous course site about where to find various course components and guides learners on how and when to connect to synchronous class sessions.</p>
<p><b>1.2 Learners are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Information is provided in the course site to help learners understand the purpose of the course and how the learning process is structured and carried out, including the course schedule, explanation of the delivery modality (e.g., online or hybrid), modes of communication and participation, types of learning activities, and how learning will be assessed. Information may also include explanations of the purpose of specific course activities, such as to build community, to expand perspectives, or to foster inclusivity and belonging.</p>

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		<p><b>Reviewers</b>, look in the course syllabus or other course documents for information that clearly introduces both the purpose and the structure of the course. If both the purpose and the structure of the course are explained, this Specific Review Standard is marked “Met.”</p> <p>Examples of information to introduce learners to the course’s purpose may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A statement that outlines the purpose of the course within the major, curriculum, or discipline</li> <li>● An explanation of how the course will contribute to the learners’ education</li> <li>● A description of how the course is relevant to learners’ lives beyond the context of the course</li> </ul> <p>Examples of information to introduce learners to the course structure may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A course outline, alignment map, or calendar/schedule</li> <li>● An activity listing</li> <li>● An explanation of why a certain modality fits the course structure</li> <li>● A course tour that depicts the course structure and a typical topic or week schedule</li> </ul> <p><b>Hybrid Courses:</b> The purpose of both the online and face-to-face portions of the course is clearly explained to learners to help them understand how and why both formats are important to the learning process. The course schedule or calendar fully covers both the online and face-to-face portions of the course and clearly specifies the dates, times, locations, and content of face-to-face class meetings.</p> <p><b>Synchronous Courses:</b> Information is provided to help learners understand what will occur during synchronous class sessions, such as discussions, lectures, etc., and what will be in the asynchronous course site, such as additional assessments, instructional materials, etc. The course schedule or calendar fully covers both the synchronous and asynchronous portions of the course and clearly specifies the dates, times, locations, and content of synchronous class meetings.</p>

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		<p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> In addition to the purpose of the competency-based course, the structure of the course and the options available to learners to complete the course are clearly delineated through detailed visuals and/or instructions. Reviewers may look for this information in the course site or linked from the course site to the program website.</p>
<p><b>1.3 Communication guidelines for the course are clearly stated.</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Guidelines for communication (sometimes referred to as “community guidelines”) are clearly stated in the course syllabus or other course documents. Forms of communication may include written, oral, and/or visual. Communication methods may include email, discussion forums, assignments, synchronous course sessions, and other interactions or collaborations. As behavior within the learning community is culturally and contextually influenced, it is important to be explicit about expectations for communication within the course. Learners may be invited to contribute to forming the course’s social contract or community guidelines.</p> <p><b>Reviewers,</b> look in the syllabus or other course documents for clearly stated communication guidelines. The substance of the guidelines is not to be evaluated, and all types of communication may not be applicable to the course.</p> <p>Examples of communication guidelines may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A respectful tone is used by all community members in all forms of communication.</li> <li>● Written communication, both formal and informal, uses the official language of instruction rather than popular online abbreviations and graphic elements such as those sometimes used in social media. Netspeak or chatspeak and internet abbreviations are to be avoided.</li> <li>● Oral communication may reflect regional dialects and culturally embedded ways of communicating (e.g., African American Vernacular English [AAVE] or Castilian Spanish).</li> <li>● Video interactions reflect a respectful tone in verbal communications and body language.</li> <li>● Spelling, punctuation, and grammar are correct.</li> </ul>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>To reinforce respect in communication, the course may provide a link or reference to the institution’s student handbook or code of conduct. Course information may include examples of specific unacceptable behaviors, such as bullying, the use of slurs, and/or microaggressions, and state how they will be addressed. (See Specific Review Standard 5.4.)</p> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> Information is available in the course site to inform learners if there are unique, additional policies or requirements for real-time communication. Information might include guidance about addressing peers and having respectful spoken discussions, as well as any requirements for being on camera in a synchronous course.</p> <p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> If there are unique, additional policies for this modality, they are included in the course site.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> Refer to the Course Worksheet to determine if interaction among learners is appropriate for the course. If interaction among learners is not appropriate to the course, mark the Specific Review Standard “Met.”</p>
<p><b>1.4 Course and institutional policies with which the learner is expected to comply are clearly stated within the course, or a link to current policies is provided.</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Course and institutional policies may address such matters as student conduct, academic integrity, establishing attendance, the grade of “Incomplete,” withdrawal without penalty, confidentiality in the classroom, diversity, equity, and inclusion policies or statements (including religious accommodations), provisions for military service members and veterans, student grievances, electronic communication, proctoring, accessibility (see also Specific Review Standard 7.2), and others. Confirm that the policies are clearly explained and the policy statements themselves, or a direct link to them, are prominently located in the course.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look in the course syllabus or other course documents for information that clearly states or links to the course and institutional policies. Check the Course Worksheet to determine whether policies are available to learners through an institutional portal rather than within the course. Use the policies uploaded to the Course Worksheet if the institution keeps them in a password-protected portal. The substance and number of policies are not to be evaluated and do not determine whether Specific Review Standard</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>1.4 is met. As late work and academic integrity policies are especially important, suggest inclusion of these policies if they are not found in the course. (See also Specific Review Standards 3.2 and 3.6.)</p> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> If there are unique, additional policies for real-time class sessions, they are included in the course site.</p> <p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> If there are unique, additional policies for this modality, they are included in the course site.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> Reviewers will find variations among facilitators and organizations in the types of policies that are applicable to the course. Eligibility for refunds and time frames for course completion are examples of organizational policies.</p>
<p><b>1.5 Minimum technology requirements for the course are clearly stated, and information on how to obtain the technologies is provided.</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>The word “technologies” covers a wide range, including hardware, software, peripherals (webcams, microphones, etc.), subscriptions, plug-ins, and mobile applications (apps). The technologies required to complete course activities are clearly listed. Course information specifies which course activities require computer use and which may be completed with different types of hardware (mobile devices vs. computers) and/or software. Learners are provided with detailed information on where and how they can obtain the technologies required for the course. The course software is obtainable via download and/or is institutionally provided and available on a variety of platforms (Windows, MacOS, Android, iOS, etc.). If software is available on only one platform, learners are notified about the specific limitations and required use.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look in the course syllabus or other course documents for information that clearly states the minimum technology requirements and how to obtain required technologies.</p> <p>Examples of technology requirements may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required peripherals, such as speakers, a microphone, extended reality accessories (e.g., AR/VR/XR), or a headset are clearly specified.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Links to all downloadable resources are provided. These resources include software and online tools, apps, plug-ins such as PDF Reader, media players, collaboration tools, social media, interactive multimedia apps, etc.</li> <li>● Instructions are provided for how to access materials available through the institution’s library or subscription services, including online journals or databases. When available, links are also provided.</li> <li>● If publisher materials are required, clearly stated instructions for how to obtain and use any required access codes are provided.</li> <li>● If proctoring or academic integrity services are utilized in the course, learners are provided with a description of their use, information about any device limitations, and instructions on how to obtain and use the services.</li> </ul> <p>Learners are informed of no-cost or low-cost technology options (e.g., hot spots, institutional hardware loans, computer labs, etc.).</p>
<p><b>1.6 Technical skills and digital information literacy skills expected of the learner are clearly stated.</b></p>	<p>1</p>	<p>General as well as course-specific technical skills learners must have to succeed in the course are specified. Digital information literacy refers to the ability to locate, evaluate, apply, create, and communicate knowledge using technology.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look in the course syllabus or other course documents for information that clearly states the technical and digital information literacy skills needed for the course. Technical skills may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using the learning management system</li> <li>● Using email with attachments</li> <li>● Creating and submitting files in commonly used word processing program formats</li> <li>● Downloading and installing software</li> <li>● Using spreadsheet programs</li> <li>● Using presentation and graphics programs</li> <li>● Using apps in digital devices</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using web conferencing tools and software</li> </ul> <p>Digital information literacy skills may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using online libraries and databases to locate and gather appropriate information</li> <li>● Using computer networks to locate and store files or data</li> <li>● Using online search tools for specific academic purposes, including the ability to use search criteria, keywords, and filters</li> <li>● Analyzing digital information for credibility, currency, and bias (e.g., disinformation, misinformation)</li> <li>● Properly citing information sources</li> <li>● Preparing a presentation of research findings</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.7 Required prior knowledge in the discipline and/or any specific competencies are clearly stated in the course site.</b></p>	1	<p>Required prior knowledge and experience help learners connect new subject matter with their existing knowledge. Prior knowledge is commonly referred to as prerequisite knowledge. Information regarding prior knowledge and experience for learner success in the course is clearly explained and prominently located within the course, in documents linked to the course, or in supporting material provided to the learner by another means.</p> <p>Examples of information about prior knowledge or experience may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prerequisite courses, requisite hours, or existing credentials required for enrollment</li> <li>● A listing of foundational knowledge needed to complete the course</li> <li>● A listing of relevant related experience and/or competencies</li> <li>● Non-disciplinary experience (e.g., work experience, service member experience, digital credentials, microcredentials, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.8 The self-introduction by the instructor is welcoming and is available in the course site.</b></p>	1	<p>The instructor introduction establishes a sense of community and connection between the instructor and the learners. It presents the instructor as personable and approachable and includes basic information such as the instructor’s name, title, photo or other visual representation, field of expertise, email address, phone number, and office hours (virtual or</p>




Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>on campus).</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for a written, audio, or video self-introduction that is welcoming in content and tone and includes contact information.</p> <p>The instructor self-introduction, in addition to the information mentioned above, could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Comments on teaching philosophy</li> <li>● A summary of past experience with teaching online courses</li> <li>● A listing of research, publications, or other scholarly activities or service</li> <li>● Personal information such as hobbies, family, travel experiences, etc.</li> <li>● A graphic representation, audio message, or video (including alternative formats to ensure accessibility)</li> <li>● Comments on the role of the instructor</li> <li>● How the instructor prefers to be addressed (e.g., Dr. Adair, Mr. Hilke, Professor Shattuck, or by first name)</li> <li>● Instructor’s preferred pronouns if desired</li> <li>● A phonetic pronunciation of the instructor’s name in text format</li> </ul> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> Instructors may introduce themselves during real-time course meetings and include their introduction asynchronously in the course site. At minimum, the asynchronous introduction includes how they would like to be addressed and their contact information.</p> <p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> The roles of instructor, facilitator, coach, mentor, assessor, tutor, or other staff who support the learner are clearly described. More than one self-introduction may be needed if learners are expected to contact different individuals for guidance on different aspects of the course.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> If the instructor’s/facilitator’s role is minimal, the self-introduction may be abbreviated to professional qualifications and means of contact. If the</p>

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		<p>course has no instructor/facilitator, information is included about whom the learner can contact with questions and how that individual may be contacted.</p>
<p><b>1.9 Learners have the opportunity to introduce themselves.</b></p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Learner introductions at the beginning of the course help to create a welcoming learning environment and a sense of community. Learners are asked to introduce themselves and are given guidance on where and how to do so.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for a means for learners to introduce themselves in the course site (e.g., discussion, survey, questionnaire, graphic representation, audio message, video, etc.).</p> <p>Course Representatives are asked to indicate in the Course Worksheet if learner introductions are appropriate to the course. In a few situations, such as when a class is very large or the class is a cohort who already know each other well, learner introductions may be conducted via alternate means such as ice breakers, small groups, etc. Instructors are asked to indicate in the Course Worksheet if there is a reason for not providing an opportunity for learner introductions. Refer to the Course Worksheet information; if introductions are not appropriate, this Specific Review Standard is marked “Met.”</p> <p>Approaches to the learner self-introduction may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Responding to specific questions (such as why they are taking the course, what are their strategies for success, what concerns they have, what they expect to learn, how they prefer to be addressed including their pronouns, phonetic pronunciation of their name in text format, etc.)</li> <li>● An open forum that allows the learners to decide what to include. Instructors may provide an example of an introduction or start the process by introducing themselves.</li> <li>● An enhanced, customized introduction. If the LMS has integrated tools that allow learners to manage their profile/public identity, learners are invited to use such tools to customize their profile. The tools may enable learners to add an image, hear a name pronunciation, share a nickname, and add pronouns.</li> </ul>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> The opportunity for introductions is available in the course site for future reference, even if learners have introduced themselves in a real-time or face-to-face meeting.</p> <p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> The opportunity for introductions is available in the course for learners to connect with the instructor.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> If the course is self-paced and does not include other learners, the Specific Review Standards is marked as “Met.”</p>


General Standard	Overview Statement
<p><b>General Standard 2 – Learning Objectives (Competencies):</b> Learning objectives describe what learners will be able to do upon completion of the course.</p>	<p>The learning objectives establish a foundation upon which the course is based. For the purpose of readability, this Rubric uses “objectives” to refer to “competencies” or “outcomes.”</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
<p><b>2.1 The course-level learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable.</b></p> <p></p>	3	<p><b>Alignment:</b> The concept of alignment is intended to convey the idea that critical course components work together to ensure that learners achieve the desired learning outcomes. Measurable course-level and module/unit-level learning objectives form the basis of alignment in a course. Other elements of the course, including those addressed in Specific Review Standards 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, and 6.1, contribute to the accomplishment of the learning objectives.</p> <p>Measurable course-level learning objectives precisely and clearly describe what learners will be able to do if they successfully complete the course. Course-level objectives describe desired learner achievement using terms that are specific and observable enough to be measured by the instructor. At some institutions, learning objectives may be called “competencies” or “learning outcomes.” For the purpose of readability, this Rubric uses</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>“objectives” for all three terms. See the Glossary for the distinction among these three terms.</p> <p>If the Course Worksheet indicates institutionally mandated course-level learning objectives are used in the course, see Special Situations at the end of this Annotation for directions.</p> <p>Examples of measurable course-level learning objectives:</p> <p>Upon completion of the course, learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Select appropriate tax strategies for different financial and personal situations.</li> <li>● Develop a comprehensive, individualized wellness action program focused on overcoming a sedentary lifestyle.</li> <li>● Demonstrate correct use of personal protective equipment.</li> <li>● Articulate personal attitudes and values related to the use of medical marijuana.</li> <li>● Apply microeconomic principles to explain why environmental problems occur.</li> <li>● Create original musical compositions using computer technology.</li> <li>● Analyze a business situation to determine an information management need.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of learning objectives that are <b>not</b> measurable:</p> <p>Upon completion of the course, learners will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Understand the nature of reasoning.</li> <li>● Demonstrate an understanding of the role of digital marketing.</li> <li>● Know basic statistical vocabulary and appropriate data collection methods.</li> <li>● Learn the basic elements of a media production software interface.</li> <li>● Be aware of the grammar conventions of standard American English.</li> <li>● Realize the significance of recent advances in genetic research.</li> <li>● Demonstrate an appreciation of contemporary art.</li> </ul>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>Learning objectives like those listed above are very difficult, if not impossible, to measure.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for measurable learning objectives that describe what learners will be able to do once they “understand” or “know” or “realize” a concept in the course. For example, a learning objective that calls for the learner to “understand the nature of reasoning” could become a measurable learning objective by recommending that “understand” be replaced by the verb “explain”: “Explain the nature of reasoning.”</p> <p>If learners are expected to demonstrate “core competencies,” such as analytical skills or the ability to express themselves effectively in writing or in other forms of communication, the course includes a reference to these foundational, core objectives in addition to objectives that relate to course-specific learning achievement. For instance, if the institution has a writing-across-the-curriculum requirement, the instructor of a course in economics may be expected to evaluate the effectiveness of learners’ writing as well as their command of principles of economics. Accordingly, objectives related to writing effectiveness will be included in the course.</p> <p>In addition to measurable objectives, a course may have objectives that are not easily measured, such as increased awareness of, sensitivity to, or interest in certain issues or subjects, or ability to work as a team member on a group project. Such objectives cannot be substituted for measurable objectives when determining whether Specific Review Standard 2.1 is met. For the Specific Review Standard to be met, eight-five percent (85%) of the course-level objectives must be measurable.</p> <p><b>Special Situations:</b> In some cases (check the Course Worksheet), the course-level objectives are institutionally mandated, and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. If the institutionally mandated course-level learning objectives are not measurable, make note of it in your recommendations. Write specific suggestions for improvement that can be used at the institution level to frame course-level learning objectives in terms that are measurable. If the course-level learning objectives are institutionally mandated, then the reviewer may need to consider Specific Review Standard 2.1 in conjunction with Specific Review Standard 2.2, as follows:</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>Specific Review Standard 2.1 is <b>met</b> under either of the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The course-level learning objectives are measurable, whether set by the institution or by the instructor.</li> <li>● The institutionally mandated course-level learning objectives are not measurable, but the instructor-written module/unit-level objectives are measurable and aligned with the course-level learning objectives.</li> </ul> <p>Specific Review Standard 2.1 is <b>not met</b> under any of the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There are no stated course-level learning objectives.</li> <li>● The course-level learning objectives set by the instructor are not measurable.</li> <li>● The institutionally mandated course-level learning objectives are not measurable, and the instructor-written module/unit-level objectives are either not measurable or not present.</li> </ul> <p>If Specific Review Standard 2.1 is not met, it is not possible to complete the course review. If this Specific Review Standard is not met, consult with the Team Chair before proceeding with the review. In such a case, the review is suspended, and the Team Chair consults the Course Representative to determine whether the learning objectives can be quickly addressed so the review can continue.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> Note that organizations (rather than institutions) and facilitators (rather than instructors) are terms generally used in these types of courses.</p>
<p><b>2.2 The module/unit-level learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p><b>Alignment:</b> The concept of alignment is intended to convey the idea that critical course components work together to ensure that learners achieve the desired learning objectives. Measurable module/unit-level learning objectives form the basis of alignment in a course because they are consistent with the course-level objectives (2.1). Objectives align with learner assessment (3.1). Instructional materials (4.1), learning activities (5.1), and tools used in the course (6.1) contribute to the accomplishment of the learning objectives.</p> <p>Learning objectives at the module/unit-level align with and are more specific than course-</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>level learning objectives. The module/unit-level learning objectives describe learner proficiency in specific, observable terms and in smaller, discrete pieces. The objectives describe the specific competencies, skills, and knowledge learners are able to demonstrate at regular intervals throughout the course. The module/unit-level objectives are aligned with the course-level objectives. If alignment is not evident, consult with the Subject Matter Expert on the team to determine if alignment is present.</p> <p>An example of a set of module/unit-level objectives that aligns with a course-level learning objective:</p> <p><b>Course-level Learning Objective</b> Upon completion of the course, you will be able to use primary and secondary sources to analyze and discuss American sentiment toward World War II prior to 1941.</p> <p><b>Module-level Learning Objectives</b> Upon completion of this module, you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify appropriate primary and secondary sources related to American sentiment during World War II.</li> <li>● Analyze interviews, opinion pieces, academic books, and journal articles that focus on World War II and American sentiment.</li> <li>● Discuss your opinions about American sentiment during 1939-1940 with peers.</li> <li>● Evaluate the bias of secondary source materials.</li> <li>● Articulate how social identities inform an individual’s beliefs, values, attitudes, and emotions.</li> </ul> <p>Module or unit objectives may be written by the instructor or may come from one or more of the instructional materials. <b>Regardless of origin, module or unit objectives must be measurable.</b> Refer to the 2.1 Annotation for instructions on how to write a measurable learning objective. At some institutions, learning objectives may be referred to as “competencies” or “learning outcomes.”</p> <p>Specific Review Standard 2.2 is <b>met</b> under either of the following circumstances:</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The module or unit-level objectives are measurable and aligned with the course-level learning objectives.</li> <li>● The institutionally mandated course-level learning objectives are not measurable, but the instructor-written module/unit-level objectives are measurable and aligned with the course-level learning objectives.</li> </ul> <p>Specific Review Standard 2.2 is <b>not met</b> under any of the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There are no stated module or unit-level objectives.</li> <li>● The module or unit-level learning objectives set by the instructor or institution are not measurable.</li> <li>● The institutionally mandated course-level learning objectives are not measurable, and the instructor-written module or unit-level objectives are measurable but do not align with the course-level learning objectives.</li> <li>● The module or unit-level learning objectives do not align with the course-level learning objectives.</li> </ul> <p>If Specific Review Standard 2.2 is not met, it is not possible to complete the course review. If you determine this Specific Review Standard is not met, consult with the Team Chair before proceeding with your review. In such a case, the review is suspended, and the Team Chair consults the Course Representative to clarify whether the matter can be quickly addressed so the review can continue.</p>
<p><b>2.3 Learning objectives are clearly stated, are learner-centered, and are prominently located in the course.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>The course and module/unit-level learning objectives are clearly stated. The use of educational or discipline jargon, unexplained terminology, and unnecessarily complex language is avoided.</p> <p>The learning objectives are learner-centered. Learning objectives describe what learners will be able to do rather than list what is taught in the course. For example, “The learner will be able to . . .” or “You will be able to . . .” Learning objectives are written in a way that allows learners, including learners with diverse linguistic backgrounds, to easily grasp their meaning and the learning outcomes expected.</p>



Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>The course and module/unit-level learning objectives are prominently located in the course site. The course-level objectives may be articulated in the course introduction or syllabus. Module/Unit-level learning objectives are prominently stated in the corresponding module or unit so they are available to the learner from within the course site.</p> <p>Confirm that all three parts of the Specific Review Standard are met. If only one or two parts of the Specific Review Standard are met, the Specific Review Standard is not met.</p> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> In addition to being provided in the face-to-face or virtual classroom, the learning objectives are stated in the course site.</p>
<p><b>2.4 The relationship between learning objectives, learning activities, and assessments is made clear.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Confirm that the connection between the learning objectives and assigned learning activities, and assessments, is clearly conveyed, whether through text, a diagram, or some other means. The relationship between learning objectives, learning activities, and assessments, is explicit. This explicitness enables learners to visualize how the learning activities and assessments are directly connected to the objectives. The learning activities and assessments are not to be seen as arbitrary or unconnected; their purpose in the course is explained in terms of the learning objectives.</p> <p>Examples of course components that clarify the relationship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A course map shows how the learning objectives connect to the learning activities and assessments.</li> <li>● A module or unit introductory page is provided with a summary or overview of module- or unit-level learning objectives, related course-level learning objectives, and their connection to course activities (learning activities, assessments, and use of instructional materials).</li> <li>● An explanation is provided for how the course-level and module- or unit-level learning objectives are met through each learning activity and assessment.</li> <li>● A numbering system demonstrates the relationship between course-level objectives, module- or unit-level objectives, learning activities, and assessments.</li> </ul>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>A course map or numbering system is not required for this Specific Review Standard to be met. However, if a course map or numbering system is used in the course, the review team verifies that the course design reflects the mapping or numbering system accurately in the course.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, consider both the course and module or unit learning objectives in your review of this Specific Review Standard. Look for information indicating which learning activities and assessments support specific learning objectives. Learning objectives are usually reiterated throughout the course with their corresponding learning activities and assessments.</p> <p>"Learning activities" are those activities that help learners meet the learning objectives. All "learning activities" are "course activities"; however, not all "course activities" are "learning activities." Some activities, like downloading software or creating presence through introductions, would be "course activities" that are not necessarily "learning activities."</p> <p>See Specific Review Standard 4.2 regarding instructions to learners on how to use the instructional materials to meet the learning objectives. The relationship between learning objectives and assessments is addressed in Specific Review Standard 3.1. The relationship between learning objectives and learning activities is addressed in Specific Review Standard 5.1 as well.</p>
<p><b>2.5 The learning objectives are suited to and reflect the level of the course.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>The expected level of achievement, as outlined in the learning objectives, is appropriate to the type and level of the course. Taxonomies that describe levels of learning can be helpful to reviewers in determining whether the objectives correspond to the level of the course.</p> <p>Examples of learning objectives that reflect achievement or level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Write a well-organized research paper, with appropriate sources and citations.</li> <li>● Apply the appropriate theorem to correctly solve mathematical equations.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of learning objectives that do not reflect achievement or level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Write a paper.</li> </ul>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply theorems.</li> </ul> <p>Courses may start with objectives that are lower in the cognitive realm, and as the course proceeds, they progress to a higher level that is suited to the level of the course (introductory, intermediate, or advanced) for that topic.</p> <p>In addition to content-specific objectives, introductory courses may address core learning skills. Core learning skills, including critical thinking, information literacy, and technology skills, are typically those that transcend an individual course and are integrated across the curriculum. Core learning skills are sometimes called “core competencies.”</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, examine the course and module or unit learning objectives for the course as a whole to ensure they describe knowledge and skills that correspond to the course level.</p> <p>It is important to note that lower-division courses will not exclusively include taxonomies from the lowest cognitive levels, and upper-division or graduate-level courses will not exclusively use taxonomies from the highest cognitive levels. For example, a Speech 101 course might start with a lower-level learning objective like “Distinguish between a persuasive speech and an informative speech” and progress to a higher-level one such as “Deliver a persuasive speech” within the same course.</p> <p>Evaluating expectations for learner achievement may be difficult for reviewers whose expertise is not in the course discipline. Reviewers are asked to apply professional judgment, experience, and their understanding of taxonomies of learning to determine if the stated learning objectives are suited to the course level. Reviewers with questions about the alignment of learning objectives with the level of the course should consult with the Subject Matter Expert on the review team.</p>

General Standard	Overview
<p><b>General Standard 3 – Assessment and Measurement:</b> Assessments are integral to the learning process and are</p>	<p>Assessment is implemented in a manner that corresponds to the course learning objectives and not only allows the instructor a broad perspective</p>

designed to evaluate learner progress in achieving the stated learning objectives.	on the learners' achievement, but also allows learners to track their learning progress throughout the course.
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Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
<p><b>SRS 3.1: The assessments measure the achievement of the stated learning objectives.</b></p> <p><b>Alignment</b></p>	3	<p><b>Alignment:</b> Course assessments (ways of confirming learner progress and achievement) are consistent with the course and module/unit-level learning objectives (2.1 and 2.2) by measuring learning progress or achievement. Instructional materials (4.1), learning activities (5.1), and course tools (6.1) support the learning objectives and enable learners to be successful on the assessments.</p> <p>The Specific Review Standard is met if the assessments measure learner achievement of the objectives.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, examine both the course-level and module-level objectives and all assessments in the course, including projects, quiz and exam questions, discussion prompts, performance-based assessments, authentic assessments, etc. Ensure that the assessments measure the learning objectives.</p> <p>Examples of alignment between a learning objective and an assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The course-level learning objective requires that learners effectively deliver a well-organized, persuasive speech about a contemporary societal issue. The module-level learning objectives are to select an appropriate persuasive speech topic, create an outline for the persuasive speech, and deliver a practiced persuasive speech. An aligned assessment would be delivering a persuasive speech.</li> <li>• The course-level learning objective is “Prepare each budget within a comprehensive budget and explain the role of each in the overall budgeting process.” The module-level objective is to “Prepare an operating budget and explain its relevance within the comprehensive budget.” An aligned assessment would require learners to prepare each budget within a comprehensive budget and submit a written explanation of the role of each individual budget.</li> </ul>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The course-level learning objective is “Amplify DNA using polymerase chain reactions (PCR).” The module-level objective is “Safely utilize laboratory equipment necessary for conducting polymerase chain reactions (PCR).” An aligned assessment would require learners to submit a written lab report of DNA amplification using PCR. The report would include safety precautions taken during the experiment.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of lack of alignment between a learning objective and an assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The module-level learning objective requires learners to deliver a persuasive speech, but the associated assessment requires learners to write a speech as opposed to delivering it.</li> <li>● The module-level learning objective in an advanced nursing course is “Learners will describe epidemiological causes of major health problems in vulnerable populations,” but the corresponding assessment is a multiple-choice quiz that requires learners to identify vulnerable populations.</li> <li>● The course-level learning objective is “Prepare each budget within a comprehensive budget and explain the importance of each in the overall budgeting process.” The module-level objective is to “Prepare an operating budget and explain its relevance within the comprehensive budget.” The corresponding assessment requires learners to interpret a sample budget rather than prepare one.</li> </ul> <p>Some assessments may be geared toward meeting objectives other than those stated in the course; for example, a course may have a writing component as part of an institution-wide writing-across-the-curriculum requirement. In that case, the reviewer might suggest including in the course the objectives that reflect the institution-wide requirement, if those objectives are not already included.</p> <p><b>Special Situations:</b> In some cases (check the Course Worksheet), the course objectives are institutionally mandated, and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider the module/unit-level objectives to assess whether the course meets Specific Review Standard 3.1.</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> A copy of any assessment delivered in real-time, such as an in-class exam or verbal quiz, is posted on the course site for the purpose of the course review.</p> <p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> Learners have flexibility in preparing for assessment of competencies, as they may have acquired competencies in a work environment or through life experience, independent study, etc.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> Learners may be producing a product or earning a certification for their occupation or profession as an assessment in a continuing education course.</p>
<p><b>SRS 3.2: The course grading policy is stated clearly, available at the beginning of the course, and consistent throughout the course site.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>A clear, written statement at the beginning of the course fully explains to the learner how the course grades are calculated. Depending on the grading system used, points, percentages, and weights for each component of the course grade are clearly stated, and the relationship(s) between points, percentages, weights, and letter grades are explained. If an alternative grading approach is used, the approach is clearly explained, including how work will be evaluated, and by whom. Late work is addressed in the grading policy. If grades are reduced because of late submission, the instructor’s policy on late submission clearly states the amount of the reduction. If there is no penalty for late submissions, or late work is considered on an individual basis, this policy is clearly explained.</p> <p>Review the clarity of the explanation and presentation to the learner, not the simplicity or complexity of a given grading system itself. Even a relatively complex grading system can be made easy to understand. Look for a clearly explained grading policy in the syllabus, Start Here folder, or another place that is open to learners at the start of the course.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, ensure the grading policy is consistent throughout the course. For example, if the syllabus indicates a points-based grading system, references to assessments are to reflect the grades with points, not percentages or letter grades.</p> <p>This Specific Review Standard is met when:</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The grading policy, whether traditional or alternative, is clearly explained and addresses how late submissions, if allowed, affect grades.</li> <li>● The grading policy is available when the course begins.</li> <li>● The grading policy is consistent for assignments, quizzes, and projects throughout the course.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of what to look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An explanation of the relationship between the final course grade and the learner’s accumulated points and percentages</li> <li>● An explanation of the relationship between points and percentages, if both are used</li> <li>● A list of all assignments showing the points (and weights, if applicable) for each. If assignments are weighted, an explanation is included for how the final grade is calculated.</li> <li>● A table that shows the letter grade equivalent for a given percentage and/or point total.</li> <li>● An explanation of how learner work will be evaluated with an alternative grading approach (e.g., ungrading, peer evaluation, contract grading, etc.)</li> <li>● An explanation of the circumstances under which late submissions will be accepted and information on any point deductions for assignments submitted late, including information stating that there will be no deduction for late work</li> <li>● If relevant, a statement that work will be accepted late on a case-by-case basis, and to contact the instructor to discuss options</li> </ul> <p>Confirm that all three parts of the Specific Review Standard are met. If only one or two parts of the Specific Review Standard are met, the Specific Review Standard is not met.</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> If information on course grading is shared live during the first class session, a copy of the information is posted in the course site for learners to reference.</p> <p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> The grading pattern may be different from that used in traditionally graded courses, and the grading policy is equally essential to describe in competency-based courses. Competency-based grades may rely exclusively on demonstration of achievement of the stated competencies, which may occur within the course or in a separate process external to the course. Grades may be in the form of a transcript listing competencies attained.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> The grading system used in this type of course may use “pass” or “fail” or “complete” or “incomplete” rather than a letter grade. Some continuing education courses are for personal enrichment, and a grading policy is not relevant. Check the Course Worksheet to determine whether grades are used in the course and if a statement of grading policy is needed. If grades are not used, this Specific Review Standard is marked as “Met.”</p>
<p><b>SRS 3.3: Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners’ work, and their connection to the course grading policy is clearly explained.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Learners are provided with a clear and complete description of the criteria that will be used to evaluate their work in the course. Evaluation criteria are provided to learners prior to beginning a particular assignment or assessment. The description or statement of criteria provides learners with clear guidance on the instructor’s expectations and on the required components of coursework and participation. The statement of criteria provides a full explanation of how a grade on an assignment or activity is calculated, whether the instructor is providing the grade and/or learners are engaging in self- or peer-evaluation. <b>Reviewers</b>, confirm that the criteria used to evaluate learners’ performance are both specific and connected to the grading policy. Note, however, that reviewers are not asked to look for and evaluate the instructor’s specific feedback to learners in Specific Review Standard 3.3. Focus on the design of the course, not the delivery of the course.</p> <p>Examples of what to look for may include:</p>



Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evidence confirming that the instructor has stated the evaluation criteria for all graded work. Criteria may be in the form of a detailed checklist or assignment prompt, rubric, or other evaluation instrument.</li> <li>● A description of how learners' participation in discussions will be graded, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the number of required posts and replies</li> <li>● the specific time period within which posts and replies will be accepted</li> <li>● the criteria for evaluating the quality of learners' initial posts</li> <li>● the criteria for evaluating responses to classmates' posts and/or replies</li> <li>● the grade or points learners can expect for varying levels of performance</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Clearly stated point values for each question in quizzes and exams, including information about partial credit.</li> <li>● For group or team projects, an explanation of the criteria used to evaluate individual or team performance and by whom the evaluation will be done (e.g., instructor, peer, and/or self).</li> </ul> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, confirm that both conditions of the Specific Review Standard are met. If only one part of the Specific Review Standard is met, the Specific Review Standard is not met.</p> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> If any work is to be evaluated during a synchronous session, information is included in the course site specifying what work will be evaluated during synchronous sessions and how the work will be evaluated. Examples include real-time class discussions, group work in web-based breakout rooms, or synchronous polls or quizzes.</p> <p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> A description makes clear in specific terms the levels of achievement required to demonstrate the defined competencies.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> A description makes clear how the attainment of course milestones or accomplishment of assignments contributes to successful completion of the course.</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
<p><b>SRS 3.4: The course includes multiple types of assessments that are sequenced and suited to the level of the course.</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Assessments provide multiple ways for learners to demonstrate progress and achievement and are designed to accommodate diverse learners. Courses might use a combination of assessment types, including exams, essays, discussions, reflective journals, group projects, portfolios, written papers, presentations, multimedia projects, and interviews. Additionally, some course designs might provide assessment pathways that enable learners to choose from several assessment options. For example, a learner who is adept at storytelling might be assessed on developing a video about the concepts learned in the course.</p> <p>The assessments are sequenced in a way that enable learners to build on previous knowledge and skills gained in this course and prerequisite courses. Assessments are paced to give learners adequate time to complete work in a thoughtful manner and demonstrate learning achievement.</p> <p>To determine whether the assessments are suited to the level of the course, refer to Specific Review Standards 2.5 and 3.1. “Explain,” for example, could be used in a learning objective for a low-level or a high-level assessment.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, consider multiple factors, such as the discipline, type, and level of the course, and consult the team Subject Matter Expert when needed. Look at the course as a whole to determine if the Specific Review Standard is met, since individual modules may not include sequenced or multiple types of assessments. (Refer to Specific Review Standard 1.2 to review the purpose and structure of the course sequencing and level, refer to Specific Review Standard 2.1 to review the course level learning objectives for application of learning, and refer to Specific Review Standard 2.5 to affirm the level of the course.) While assessments may reflect varying levels of cognitive engagement, it is important for learners to have the opportunity to apply what they are learning. If any of the three parts of this Specific Review Standard are not present (variety of types, sequenced, suited-to-level) then this Standard is marked as “Not Met.”</p> <p>Examples of assessments that meet the Specific Review Standard:</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assessments in an anthropology course progress from defining terms, to a short paper explaining the relationship between various theoretical constructs, to a term paper that includes the application of theoretical constructs.</li> <li>● Assessments in a public speaking course include submitting a topic and draft outline for feedback, then submitting a draft of the speech and, finally, delivering the speech.</li> <li>● Assessments in a world history course begin with multiple-choice quizzes and scenario-based discussions, and progress to a term paper that asks learners to analyze and evaluate the various events leading up to World War II.</li> <li>● Assessments in a graduate-level environmental science course progress from identifying solutions to pervasive pollution issues, to in-depth discussions responding to case studies, and a final project that proposes a solution to a pollution problem in the learner’s community.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of assessments that may not meet the Specific Review Standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An environmental design course includes only multiple-choice quizzes and a multiple-choice final exam assessment.</li> <li>● In an introductory course in information literacy, the first assessment requires learners to locate research materials, while library research skills and methods are not covered until later in the course.</li> <li>● In a human resources management course, no assessments are administered during the first 12 weeks of the semester, and an essay, term paper, and final exam are due during the 13th, 14th, and 15th weeks, respectively.</li> <li>● Assessments in an introductory linguistics course only consist of asking learners to respond to the questions at the conclusion of each textbook chapter; no additional assessments are included.</li> <li>● Assessments in a graduate-level course in political science test only lower-level learning, such as multiple-choice, “knowledge-check” quizzes and short essays asking learners to define terms; no higher-level assessments are included.</li> </ul>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>Circumstances affecting some graduate courses: The grade may be entirely based on a major assignment due at the end of the term. In this case, benchmarks for progress are provided during the term, with feedback from the instructor or peers.</p> <p>Examples of benchmark assignments might include submission of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An outline or project plan</li> <li>• A bibliography</li> <li>• A précis of the paper or project</li> <li>• One or more preliminary drafts</li> </ul> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> Copies of or information about assessments completed real-time are included in the course site for purposes of the course review.</p> <p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> Assessment of competencies may not follow the pattern of assessment in traditional courses. Focus on whether the assessment instruments credibly establish that the learner has demonstrated achievement of the competency.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> If the course is short, perhaps only one module in length, a single assessment may be sufficient. Expect that shorter courses may have fewer feedback opportunities.</p>
<p><b>SRS 3.5: The types and timing of assessments provide learners with multiple opportunities to track their learning progress with timely feedback.</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Smaller, lower-stakes assessments provide learners with opportunities to receive timely feedback that can be used to track learning progress and improve learning achievement. Additionally, learning is enhanced if learners receive frequent, substantive, and timely feedback. The feedback may come from the instructor directly, from assessments that have feedback built into them, or from other learners. (Instructors interact with learners in other ways than providing feedback. See Specific Review Standard 5.3 which addresses the instructor’s plan for interacting with learners.)</p>


Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p><b>Reviewers</b>, look at the type and schedule of assessments, as well as the types of feedback associated with them, to determine whether learners have multiple opportunities to engage with assessments that provide feedback to track their learning progress.</p> <p>Examples that meet this Specific Review Standard may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Writing assignments include the submission of a preliminary draft for instructor comment and suggestions for improvement.</li> <li>● Self-check quizzes include informative auto-feedback with each answer choice.</li> <li>● Quizzes allow for multiple attempts with informative auto-feedback.</li> <li>● Interactive games and simulations have feedback built in.</li> <li>● Assignments that receive feedback, such as reflective journals or discussions, precede related higher-stakes assessments, such as longer essays, papers, or presentations.</li> <li>● Peer reviews and critiques provide learners with peer feedback, as well as an opportunity to self-reflect on their work in relation to that of peers.</li> <li>● Learners are given the opportunity to compare their work to model papers or essays, sample answers, or answer keys prior to completing an assessment, thereby encouraging reflection and improvement.</li> </ul> <p>Examples that may not meet this Specific Review Standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Feedback on automatically scored or instructor-graded quizzes provides learners with a grade but does not tell them which questions they got wrong or provide any additional information that helps them track their learning or improve their performance.</li> <li>● A preliminary draft of a major paper is due, and three days later the final draft is due, without enough time for learners to adequately apply instructor or peer feedback.</li> <li>● The learner receives credit for submitting a preliminary draft of an assignment, but no feedback is given on the draft.</li> </ul>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The course includes assignments, but the syllabus indicates that the instructor will not provide feedback and grades for all assignments until the end of the course.</li> <li>• Assignments (e.g., discussions, brief reflections) are graded as “complete” or “not complete,” and course information indicates that learners will get credit for participating in the assignment but will not receive feedback.</li> </ul> <p>This Specific Review Standard is met when smaller, lower-stakes assessments are timed purposefully in order for learners to use timely feedback to track their learning progress.</p>
<p><b>SRS 3.6: The assessments provide guidance to the learner about how to uphold academic integrity.</b></p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Integrity in educational work enables communities of learners to interact in a spirit of trust, honesty, and fairness. Learners, particularly in online courses, benefit from specific and contextualized information about how to comply with institutional academic integrity policies and standards (see Specific Review Standard 1.4) as they complete assessments in the course. This guidance enables learners to apply abstract principles of academic integrity to real situations within the course (and discipline).</p> <p>The Specific Review Standard is met if the course assessments incorporate or reflect how the institution’s academic integrity policies and standards are relevant to those assessments. Information about academic integrity may be located in the instructions for individual assessments, or general descriptions and applications of academic integrity may be described by type elsewhere in the course (e.g., a policy restricting peer collaboration on all course exams may be included in the syllabus).</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, consult the Subject Matter Expert on the team to determine if the guidance provided is effective for the course and its assessment types. Each discipline may have specific, contextual needs for applying institutional academic integrity policies. For example, academic integrity guidance on assessments in a literature course may be different from guidance relevant in an engineering course.</p> <p>Examples of guidance about academic integrity in course assessments may include:</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An essay assignment provides information and resources on the appropriate use of sources, including how to paraphrase to ethically attribute ideas to authors.</li> <li>• A syllabus statement details what sources are permitted (e.g., a certain type of calculator, a double-sided sheet of handwritten notes, etc.) and are not permitted (e.g., no sources or resources external to the course are to be consulted or used) on exams.</li> <li>• A homework assignment with a series of word problems states that learners may collaborate on the calculations but must individually write their justifications for the process and outcome.</li> <li>• A team project prompt articulates individual and team responsibilities for submitting various components, and whether outside assistance beyond the team is permitted.</li> <li>• A coding project acknowledges that professional programmers often share snippets of code online and stipulates that code sharing is not permitted in this project because learners' progress will be evaluated individually.</li> </ul>

General Standard	Overview Statement
<p><b>General Standard 4 – Instructional Materials:</b> A variety of contextualized instructional materials enables learners to achieve the stated learning objectives.</p>	<p>The focus of this Standard is on supporting the course objectives through instructional materials that prepare learners to effectively interact with course topics and ideas, rather than on qualitative judgments about the instructional materials.</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
<p><b>SRS 4.1: The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated learning objectives.</b></p>	3	<p><b>Alignment:</b> The instructional materials used in the course align with the course-level and module/unit-level learning objectives (2.1 and 2.2) by contributing to the achievement of those objectives and by integrating effectively with the tools (6.1), assessments (3.1), and learning activities (5.1) selected for the course.</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>Instructional materials may include but are not limited to textbooks, openly licensed materials (e.g., open-source, open educational resources), publisher- or instructor-created materials, slide presentations and interactive content (such as simulations), expert lectures, videos, images, diagrams, and websites. The materials align with the learning objectives to provide the information and resources learners need to achieve the stated learning objectives.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, consider both course-level and module/unit-level learning objectives in the review, and look for a clear and direct way in which instructional materials are aligned with learning objectives.</p> <p>Note that publisher-created materials may contain additional objectives beyond those in the course under review, such as textbook chapter objectives. <b>Reviewers</b>, ensure that publisher-created materials align with course-level and module-level learning objectives or that the instructor has directed learner attention to the specific publisher content that does align with the course-level and module-level learning objectives. Decisions on this Specific Review Standard may be difficult for reviewers whose expertise is not in the course discipline. Consult with the team Subject Matter Expert and use professional judgment to determine if the instructional materials support the learning objectives.</p> <p>Reviewers are encouraged to consult a digital version of the textbook, if available, as many publishers provide electronic access. In applying this Specific Review Standard to the course, reviewers will work closely with the Subject Matter Expert on the team. If the instructional materials are from publishers, review team members must be provided with access to all digital publisher materials to determine whether Specific Review Standard 4.1 is met.</p> <p>Some courses may assign multiple resources rather than one single textbook. <b>Reviewers</b> consider bibliographies, webliographies, openly licensed materials (e.g., open-source, open educational resources) provided by the instructor, or, in some cases, developed by learners themselves following guidelines provided by the instructor.</p>



Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p><b>Reviewers</b>, focus on the alignment of the instructional materials with the learning objectives rather than attempt to evaluate the content. Confirming this alignment also ensures the instructional materials are suited to the level of the course, if the learning objectives have been determined to be suited to the level of the course (Specific Review Standard 2.5).</p> <p><b>Special Situations:</b> In some cases (check the Course Worksheet), the course-level learning objectives are institutionally mandated, and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider instead the module/unit-level objectives in determining whether the course meets Specific Review Standard 4.1.</p> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> Copies or descriptions of materials used or delivered live are included in the asynchronous course site for purposes of the course review.</p>
<p><b>SRS 4.2: The relationship between the use of instructional materials in the course and completion of learning activities and assessments is clearly explained.</b></p>	3	<p>Learners are provided with an explanation of how the instructional materials prepare them to complete learning activities and assessments. If optional instructional materials are provided and their use is recommended in the course, the materials are labeled as optional. The relevance of required and optional instructional materials is explained.</p> <p>Consider whether the relationship between the instructional materials and learning activities and assessments is reflected in both the order in which the materials are presented and in the explanations of the materials. An explanation describes the relationship between the learning material and its application to an activity and/or assessment. The explanations may be found in a module overview or task list, where the materials are placed or linked in the course, or in activity and/or assessment descriptions or instructions.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, confirm that instructional materials are provided in such a way as to be useful to the learner in completing learning activities and assessments.</p> <p>Examples that explain the relationship between instructional materials and learning activities and assessments may include:</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A module reading list presents an instructor-created topic overview that learners are asked to read prior to exploring more specific external video and article examples that learners will engage with in a written assignment.</li> <li>● A schedule of assigned readings is accompanied by an explanation of how the readings will be used in online discussion forum posts.</li> <li>● A quiz overview indicates which chapters or module resources to study to prepare for the quiz questions.</li> <li>● Instructions for an essay prompt indicate which module materials are to be referenced.</li> <li>● Links to external websites include a description of the site and an explanation of how the information at the site is to be used in the learning activities and assessments.</li> <li>● An explanation is provided for how required or optional publisher materials, including presentation slides, videos, and other content, are to be used to prepare for the learning activities and assessments.</li> <li>● A narrated, captioned presentation created by the instructor is accompanied by this text: “This narrated presentation is seven minutes long and provides an overview and examples of copyright and fair use. You will use this information in your blog post this week, and there will also be questions on your self-check quiz regarding copyright and fair use.”</li> </ul> <p>In courses in which learners are expected to find their own learning materials, such as in learner-led discussions or research projects, guidelines are provided that assist the learner in identifying relevant materials and in distinguishing between required and optional materials and between scholarly and non-scholarly sources for academic works.</p> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> Instructions make clear which materials are to be used to complete in-person (hybrid) or live (synchronous) activities and assessments, and which are specific to the asynchronous online portion of the course.</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> In competency-based courses, all materials may be optional. The introduction specifies which materials and activities are required, supplemental, or optional.</p>
<p><b>SRS 4.3: The course models the academic integrity expected of learners by providing both source references and permissions for use of instructional materials.</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Instructional materials include source references, and permission has been obtained to utilize the materials in the course.</p> <p>Sources for materials used in the course are clearly identified with references. This expectation applies to instructor-created materials, journal articles, publisher materials, textbooks, images, graphic materials, tables, videos, audio recordings, websites, slides, and all forms of multimedia.</p> <p>Examples of instructional materials for which references or attributions are to be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Images for which permissions have been obtained that appear in a module</li> <li>● Videos linked from a video repository tool</li> <li>● Journal articles linked from a library portal for download</li> <li>● An open-source textbook</li> <li>● Instructor-created content</li> </ul> <p>The format of references in instructional materials follows the style prescribed in a recognized guide, such as APA, MLA, or Chicago. At minimum, a reference includes the author or owner name; date of publication; resource title, if supplied; URL or source, such as a publisher; and license type, if openly licensed.</p> <p>When an extensive body of material comes from a single source (e.g., instructional materials from a publisher), a single reference suffices. Reviewers might look for reference information in a list of materials, in the course syllabus, or in another course document. For example, under “Instructional Materials” in the syllabus, “All PowerPoint Files” may be included and then listed with an appropriately formatted reference, rather than individually citing each PowerPoint slide set in each module. A course might include a single document</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>that lists the sources of all materials. <b>Reviewers</b>, examine the course to determine whether materials are referenced.</p> <p>If permission to copy or download and post digital materials has been received, the permission to use those materials is posted in the course alongside or beneath the material, or in a single location such as a “Permissions” section in the syllabus. In such a case, learners are able to see that the use of the intellectual property in this manner was permitted by the property owner (author, publisher, etc.).</p> <p>Examples of how required permissions may be addressed in the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learners are directed to acquire instructional materials from sources that provide permission for use, such as publishers or book rental organizations for textbooks.</li> <li>● Permission for use of scholarly journal articles or other materials is provided within the access rights to a library’s databases or sites that host original videos.</li> <li>● Instructional materials that are openly licensed (e.g., open-source, open educational resources) include links to the original materials, or a link to a statement designating the materials as open-source appears with the materials.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of instructional materials that require permission for use may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A PDF of a scholarly journal article downloaded from a library database and posted in the course site</li> <li>● A chapter from a textbook converted to PDF (or other e-reader formats) and posted in the course</li> <li>● A video downloaded from an online source (e.g., a streaming video service, a publisher’s website) and posted in the course site</li> <li>● A PDF of an article the instructor has published in a scholarly journal</li> <li>● Images or graphics not in the public domain or that have not been openly licensed</li> </ul>


Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<i>Meeting QM Specific Review Standards regarding references and permissions does not guarantee or imply that specific copyright laws of any country are met.</i>
<b>SRS 4.4: The instructional materials represent up-to-date theory and practice in the discipline.</b>	2	<p>The instructional materials represent current thinking, practice, and application in the discipline.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An introductory computer course might include information on recent trends in data storage.</li> <li>● A writing course might provide learners with examples of visual composition for analysis.</li> <li>● A chemistry course might include computerized models to demonstrate chemical operations.</li> <li>● An early childhood education course might include evidence-based practices for inclusive learning spaces.</li> </ul> <p>Decisions on whether the course meets this Specific Review Standard may be difficult for reviewers whose expertise is not in the course discipline. Consult with the team Subject Matter Expert and use professional judgment to determine if the materials are current.</p> <p>Older works considered foundational may meet Specific Review Standard 4.4. The Subject Matter Expert on the team verifies that a work is foundational in the discipline. Foundational sources may be given appropriate context and application for current practice. For example, a science course contains instructional materials that present current theory and practice, and the course may also include materials of historical significance.</p> <p>In considering whether this Specific Review Standard is met, examine the Course Worksheet for additional information regarding the currency and selection of instructional materials.</p>
<b>SRS 4.5: A variety of instructional materials is used in the course.</b>	2	The course presents a variety of relevant instructional materials that may include textbooks and other publications, instructor-created resources, websites, and multimedia. Variety may take the form of different types of media used to deliver content. Variety may take the

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>form of different perspectives and different representations of ideas. Variety may also appear in images representing different types of people. Examples, questions, and case studies use names from a wide variety of cultures and represent different interpersonal dynamics. Variety does not refer to a specific number, but rather refers to using different types and qualities of aligned material in the course.</p> <p>The value of variety in instructional materials is supported by research-based frameworks and pedagogies including Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Universal Design for Learning guidelines promote the perspective that diverse learners benefit from multiple means of representation in their learning materials. Quality instructional materials reflect the diversity of learners who use them and thereby help learners feel included and a sense of belonging. Equitable representation and experiences in instructional materials will help foster learner engagement.</p> <p>This Specific Review Standard is met if at least one out of three of the following types of variety are present in the course: (1) a variety of instructional materials; (2) different perspectives and different representations of ideas; or (3) diverse, non-stereotypical representations of persons or demographic groups. Reviewers may provide helpful recommendations related to any qualities of “variety,” even if the Specific Review Standard is met.</p> <p>(Variety Type 1) Examples of instructional materials that provide variety of type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A textbook authored by a single author, multiple videos, and a selection of websites</li> <li>● Several scholarly journal articles as assigned or optional readings, multiple videos, and a few audio podcasts created by the instructor</li> <li>● A series of topical videos and a textbook</li> </ul> <p>In reviewing instructional materials, look for evidence that learners have options for how they consume content (e.g., reading an article or text, viewing a video, or listening to a podcast).</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>(Variety Type 2) Examples of instructional materials that provide diverse perspectives or ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The instructor provides a graphic organizer outlining distinct perspectives that the lesson materials offer.</li> <li>● The reading list identifies thinkers who take opposing approaches on a debatable topic.</li> <li>● The course includes a selection of texts by authors who represent views that challenge the status quo.</li> <li>● Learning materials include texts by authors who are traditionally not represented or are underrepresented in the discipline.</li> </ul> <p>(Variety Type 3) Examples of instructional materials that provide diverse and non-stereotypical types of representation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Instructional materials, including images and media, represent a variety of ethnicities, races, genders, sexualities, family structures, religions, abilities, body types, and ages.</li> <li>● Videos represent diverse voices and perspectives.</li> <li>● Case studies and scenarios describe families and relationships of different structures and types.</li> <li>● Prompts and examples include names and stories from different cultures.</li> </ul> <p>Decisions on this Specific Review Standard may be difficult for reviewers whose expertise is not in the course discipline. Check the Course Worksheet, consult with the team Subject Matter Expert, and use professional judgment to determine whether a sufficient variety of materials is used.</p> <p>The purpose of the review is not to evaluate the instructional materials but rather to ensure a variety of (1) instructional materials, (2) perspectives, and/or (3) representations within the selected content. <b>Reviewers</b>, confirm that at least one out of three types of “variety”</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		are met to determine whether this Specific Review Standard is marked as “Met.”

General Standard	Overview Statement
<b>General Standard 5 – Learning Activities and Learner Interaction:</b> Learning activities foster and facilitate learner interaction and engagement.	Course components that promote active learning contribute to the learning process.

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
<b>SRS 5.1: The learning activities help learners achieve the stated objectives.</b>  	3	<p><b>Alignment:</b> The purpose of learning activities is to provide opportunities for learners to practice their new skills and knowledge through interaction with the course content, other learners, and their instructor. Such interactions help learners achieve the stated learning objectives. Learning activities align with course and module/unit-level learning objectives (2.1 and 2.2), help to prepare learners for the assessments (3.1), and utilize instructional materials (4.1) and course tools (6.1) to engage learners in activities that promote achievement of the stated learning objectives.</p> <p>Learning activities provide reinforcement and promote achievement through interaction with the course content and learning community.</p> <p>Examples of activities include participating in class discussions, role-playing, virtual field trips, simulation exercises, scenario-based activities, and web scavenger hunts; watching videos with embedded check-in questions; creating outlines, concept maps, graphic organizers, and laboratory skills exercises; and completing guided lessons, practice quizzes and self-checks.</p> <p>Ensure that the activities support the learning objectives and provide the practice opportunities needed to achieve them.</p> <p>Examples of alignment between activities and learning objectives:</p>



Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The course-level learning objective requires that learners effectively deliver a well-organized persuasive speech about a contemporary societal issue. The module-level learning objectives are to select an appropriate persuasive speech topic, create an outline for the persuasive speech, and deliver a practiced persuasive speech. The learning activities are to brainstorm and receive instructor feedback on a speech topic, submit a speech outline for peer review, and practice recording the speech prior to delivery. These activities help learners prepare to successfully complete the assessment of delivering a persuasive speech.</li> <li>● The course-level learning objective is “Prepare each budget within a comprehensive budget and explain the importance of each in the overall budgeting process.” The module-level objective is to “Prepare an operating budget and explain its relevance within the comprehensive budget.” Learners construct sample budgets as practice activities and explain what would happen if the operating budget is not included in the comprehensive budget. These activities support the assessments of learners preparing each budget within a comprehensive budget and explaining the importance of the individual budgets.</li> <li>● The course-level learning objective is "Design and conduct scientific experiments." The module-level objective is "Safely use laboratory reagents and equipment." The learning activities are to operate a balance, prepare solutions, and dispose of wastes. These activities support the assessment of learners designing and conducting scientific experiments.</li> </ul> <p>Examples of a mismatch between activities and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The module-level learning objective is “Learners will deliver a practiced persuasive speech,” but the associated learning activities in the course do not include opportunities to practice that skill and receive feedback.</li> <li>● The module-level learning objective is “Prepare an operating budget and explain its relevance within a comprehensive budget.” The learners review sample operating budgets worked out by the instructor but have no opportunity to create one or to explain the component’s importance within the comprehensive budget.</li> </ul>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The module-level learning objective in an advanced nursing course is “Learners will describe epidemiological principles of major health problems in vulnerable populations,” but the corresponding learning activities solely engage learners in reading about and discussing the roles and functions of health care professionals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Special Situations:</b> In some cases (check the Course Worksheet), the course-level learning objectives are institutionally mandated, and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider instead the module/unit-level objectives in determining whether the course meets Specific Review Standard 5.1.</p> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> Copies of or information about activities completed live are listed in the course site.</p>
<p><b>SRS 5.2: Learning activities provide opportunities for interactions that support active learning.</b></p>	3	<p>Interactive learning activities promote active learning and engagement through three types of interaction: learner-content, learner-instructor, and learner-learner. (The course does not have to include learner-learner interaction for this Specific Review Standard to be met. Refer to the Course Worksheet to determine whether learner-learner interaction is suitable for the course.) Meaningful interactions that promote learners’ development of skills are designed as activities to support the course objectives and may vary with the subject matter, purpose, and level of the course. Look for the purpose of the interactions and not just the number of opportunities for interaction.</p> <p>Active learning involves learners engaging by "doing" something, such as analyzing data, evaluating potential solutions to a problem, or applying concepts and information. Fostering active learning entails guiding learners to increasing levels of responsibility for their own learning through interaction opportunities that reinforce learners’ confidence, discovery through experience, and engaging in reflection. Active learning opportunities promote equity and inclusion through learner-centered exploration and meaningful interaction. Opportunities for active learning reflect the diversity of learners’ characteristics, backgrounds, and abilities. Activities designed to ensure equity in learning experiences may include but are not limited to offering a choice of activities where possible, giving learners autonomy over their role in collaborative work, and providing learners</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>opportunities to apply their own experiences and prior knowledge to solve real-world problems.</p> <p>Activities for learner-instructor interaction might include an assignment or project submitted for instructor feedback, learner-instructor discussion in a synchronous session or an asynchronous discussion board exchange, or a frequently-asked-questions (FAQ) discussion forum moderated by the instructor. These activities might also include polls, audiovisual assignment feedback, video announcements, or personalized messages.</p> <p>Activities for learner-content interaction might include responding to guided questions while watching a recorded lecture, completing a workbook or online exercise, choosing content from a number of provided aligned options, concept mapping or graphic organizing, or participating in virtual expeditions.</p> <p>Activities for learner-learner interaction might include collaborative activities such as group discussions, small-group projects, group problem-solving assignments, peer critiques, think-pair-share activities, or role-playing.</p> <p>Examples of interaction opportunities that promote active learning and engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learners are invited to bring their remaining questions from a practice quiz to an asynchronous or synchronous study session with the instructor. (Learner-content interaction and learner-instructor interaction)</li> <li>● Learners are placed into groups in an LMS-based discussion to evaluate a challenge to accepted doctrine in economics, collaboratively develop a summary of the arguments, and offer the group's conclusion to the class for feedback. (Learner-learner interaction and learner-content interaction)</li> <li>● Learners are asked to select from a list of relevant mathematical concepts and collaboratively develop a peer lesson. (Learner-content interaction and learner-learner interaction)</li> </ul>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p><b>Reviewers</b>, review the types of interactions designed into the activities based on the nature of the course and not on personal preferences. Determine if opportunities for learner-instructor and learner-content interaction are present in the course. If learner-learner interaction is appropriate to the course (check the Course Worksheet), it is also included in the course. When reviewing opportunities for learner interaction, keep in mind that learning environments usually are broader than a single course and may include informal networks that are beyond the scope of a QM review.</p> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> In courses that use both online and face-to-face settings, the learning activities that occur in these two settings are connected by a common thread or theme and are mutually reinforcing. The connection and reinforcement are made clear to learners. For example, the different parts of a particular activity might be sequenced in an alternating way in online and real-time meetings of the course. The course provides copies of or information about activities to be completed during real-time meetings.</p> <p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> In competency-based courses, the interaction with the instructor, facilitator, coach, mentor, or assessor may take different forms. Learner-learner interaction in discussion forums is encouraged but may be limited by the differential pace of individual learners' progress through the course; and other forms of learner-learner interaction may be impractical, as learners prepare in different ways for assessment of their competencies. Communication through program-level, learner-learner forums is a viable alternative to course-based forums.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> In courses that are self-paced, learner-instructor interaction may be limited or non-existent. Check the Course Worksheet to determine whether the course is facilitated. If it is not facilitated, an exception is made and this Specific Review Standard is marked as "Met."</p>
<p><b>SRS 5.3: The instructor's plan for regular interaction with learners in substantive ways during the course is clearly stated.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>A clear plan for instructor-learner interaction helps promote substantive interaction between instructors and learners during the course. The plan includes details regarding when learners can expect the instructor's responses to questions, at what intervals learners will receive substantive instructor feedback on assignments, and how the instructor has designed other regular feedback and communication opportunities into the course.</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>Frequent feedback from the instructor increases learners' sense of engagement in a course. Learners are better able to manage their learning activities when they know upfront when to expect feedback from the instructor. Clear information is provided about when learners will receive instructor responses to emails and posted questions, feedback on assignments, and grades.</p> <p>For example, instructors might state that they will reply to emails within 24 hours, and feedback for assignments will be posted within a week after the due date. This information may appear in the course syllabus or in a “Start Here” folder. If it is necessary to alter the response-time plan during the course, how the adjustment will be made is clearly communicated.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for an instructor plan for interacting with learners that provides substantive feedback at regular intervals. The instructor plan must include both specified regular intervals and substantive interaction for this Specific Review Standard to be marked “Met.”</p> <p>The instructor’s plan for regular interaction might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Information on interacting with learners during office/learner hours and online discussions</li> <li>● Ways the instructor will interact individually with learners, such as through mid-term email check-ins, instructor responses to self-reflective learning activities, instructor feedback on assessments, or as responses during learner introductions</li> <li>● Routine posting of announcements or course-specific messages</li> <li>● A schedule for online review sessions during the semester</li> </ul> <p>The instructor’s plan for substantive interaction might include:</p>


Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Information on how the instructor will respond to identified gaps in learner preparation or comprehension to ensure all learners have access to background knowledge or context</li> <li>● Details about how the instructor will provide individualized feedback on a learner's coursework, such as through rubric comments, summary comments, or in-text comments</li> <li>● Information about the instructor's availability to respond to questions about the content of a course</li> <li>● A statement that the instructor will provide learners with a choice for receiving feedback in accessible formats (e.g., using an audio recording with a transcript versus written feedback)</li> </ul> <p>This information may be found in the syllabus or associated with certain assignments. The purpose of the review is to ensure the instructor has stated a plan to provide learners with substantive feedback at regular intervals.</p> <p><i>Meeting Specific Review Standard 5.3 does not guarantee or imply that regulations of any country regarding regular and substantive interaction are met.</i></p> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> In addition to the application of the Specific Review Standard described above for online courses, the instructor's plan for real-time interaction, such as providing direct instruction and answering questions, is stated in the course site.</p> <p><b>Competency-Based Courses:</b> Interaction with the instructor, facilitator, coach, mentor, or assessor may take different forms. The course introduction indicates the various forms of faculty and staff support available to the learner and explains when learners can expect to receive feedback.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> In courses that are self-paced, learner-instructor interaction may be limited or non-existent. Check the Course Worksheet to determine whether the course is facilitated. If it is not facilitated, an exception is made and this Specific Review</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		Standard is marked "Met."
<p><b>SRS 5.4: The requirements for learner interaction are clearly stated.</b></p>	2	<p>A clear explanation of the requirements for learner interaction helps learners plan and manage their class participation and is important for promoting learners' active involvement in the course. The statement of requirements also provides a basis for the instructor to evaluate learner participation. <b>Reviewers</b>, look for a clear statement of the instructor's expectations for learner participation in required course interactions (frequency, length, timeliness, etc.), including learner-learner interactions in assessments and activities, if relevant. (Check the Course Worksheet to determine if learner-learner interaction is a component of this course.)</p> <p>Guidelines or expectations for learners interacting with their instructor are stated clearly, including if learner responses to instructor-initiated interaction are required.</p> <p>Expectations for learner participation may be stated in the course information page or syllabus. These requirements may specify the nature of the required participation and expectations for frequency and quality of the learner's interactions. Learners might have a frequency expectation that requires them to log into the course site, or complete specific tasks in the site, a certain number of days per week. An example of an activity instruction that sets both quantity and quality expectations is "A discussion forum post is considered substantive if it is at least 250 words in length and presents your original analysis and evaluation, rather than simply a summary, of scholarly perspectives on the discussion topic."</p> <p>More specific, task-related performance expectations may be included in the individual task description. For example, a group project assignment might include expectations for individual participation. The instructor may include guidelines on reading and responding to the instructor's and classmates' posts within a certain length of time or provide rubrics detailing how learner interactions are evaluated. (See also Specific Review Standard 3.3.)</p> <p>Learner diversity in the context of course interactions can present both challenges and opportunities. In some instances, a learner's interaction with the instructor, with content, or with fellow learners may entail cultural differences or personal sensitivities related to the</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>nature of the interaction. The instructor can alert learners to sensitive content with descriptions that identify potentially problematic or traumatizing content in chosen instructional materials. Clearly explaining the role of the instructor and expectations for interactions with the instructor and with other learners is especially helpful to learners from cultures in which deference to the instructor is customary and who may need encouragement to actively participate by voicing their opinions. Interaction policies might also include statements related to inclusiveness and belonging, as well as bullying and microaggressions. The instructor's written expectations for interaction may include guidelines that recognize and reinforce the value of differences in perspectives and tips on how to foster inclusive interactions and identify and respond to microaggressions. (See also Specific Review Standard 1.3.)</p> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> Learner interaction requirements for real-time course sessions are posted in the course site. Look for a clear statement of expectations for interacting with peers live, such as guidelines for in-person group work for hybrid courses or breakout rooms and other collaborative activities in synchronous courses. These courses might also have separate requirements for attendance and participation in real-time course sessions.</p> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> In courses that are self-paced, learner-content interaction may be the only type of interaction. Check the Course Worksheet to determine whether the course is facilitated and if learner-learner interaction is appropriate. If it is not facilitated and learner-learner interaction is not appropriate, an exception is made and this Specific Review Standard is marked "Met."</p>

General Standard	Overview Statement
<p><b>General Standard 6 – Course Technology:</b> Course technologies support learners' achievement of course objectives.</p>	<p>The technologies enabling the various tools used in the course facilitate the learning process.</p>



Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
<p data-bbox="201 240 567 341"><b>SRS 6.1: The tools used in the course support the learning objectives.</b></p> 	3	<p data-bbox="798 240 1871 341"><b>Alignment:</b> The tools selected for the course align with the course-level and module/unit-level objectives (2.1 and 2.2) by effectively supporting the course’s assessments (3.1), instructional materials (4.1), and learning activities (5.1).</p> <p data-bbox="798 383 1877 448"><b>Reviewers</b>, examine both the course-level and module/unit-level objectives in your review of tools.</p> <p data-bbox="798 490 1858 591">Tools are types of software and applications that enable learner interaction and may be used for content delivery or providing feedback in the course; they may be included in or external to the learning management system (LMS).</p> <p data-bbox="798 633 1892 873">Examples of tools include, but are not limited to, automated self-check exercises, discussion boards, social media, games, whiteboards, blogs, virtual/augmented/extended reality, web conferencing, assignment and quiz tools, video repositories, and collaboration tools. Clear information and instructions are provided regarding how the tools support the learning objectives. For example, a course that requires posting to a discussion forum makes it clear how the tools used for discussions support a learning objective. Tools are not used simply for their own sake.</p> <p data-bbox="798 915 1434 948">Examples of alignment between tools and objectives:</p> <ul data-bbox="848 997 1856 1214" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A course objective is that learners will be able to compare and contrast two different periods in U.S. history. A diagramming tool is used to illustrate the comparison and contrast.</li> <li>• A module-level objective is that learners will be able to demonstrate the steps of performing CPR. Learners use a simulation tool to demonstrate the steps on a virtual patient.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="798 1256 1121 1289">Examples of misalignment:</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A course objective is that learners will be able to diagram the process of photosynthesis, but an assessment asks learners to describe the process using word processing software.</li> <li>• A course objective is that learners will be able to discuss a topic, but the technology being used is the Test/Exam tool in the LMS.</li> </ul> <p><b>Special Situations:</b> In some cases (check the Course Worksheet), the course objectives are mandated by the institution, and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider instead the module/unit-level objectives to assess whether Specific Review Standard 6.1 is met.</p> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> Look in the course site for information on what technology is used in real-time, and what the technology is used for. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breakout rooms for synchronous discussions</li> <li>• Virtual Reality (VR) software used in the face-to-face portion of a hybrid course</li> <li>• Augmented reality (AR) software and hardware used to learn the different parts of a human cadaver, looking at it layer by layer</li> </ul>
<p><b>SRS 6.2: Course tools promote learner engagement and active learning.</b></p>	2	<p>Tools used in the course help learners actively engage in the learning process rather than passively absorb information. The selected course tools support active learning through learner-instructor, learner-content, and learner-learner interaction. Active learning tools that encourage learning by interacting, retrieving, discussing, investigating, and creating are evident.</p> <p>While specific tools are not required for this Specific Review Standard to be met, look for tools that support learner engagement and active learning, such as social media, mobile technologies, games, simulations, blogs, podcasts, polling software, survey tools, and virtual worlds.</p> <p>In some courses, learners cannot access tools that require high bandwidth. Check the Course Worksheet to determine whether the course has such limitations.</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p>Examples of tools that support engagement and active learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Software that facilitates interaction in real time (synchronous), such as collaborative tools, webinars, and virtual worlds</li> <li>● Software that facilitates asynchronous interaction, such as shared documents</li> <li>● Animations, simulations, and games that require learner input and allow for faculty feedback (automated or instructor-initiated)</li> <li>● Discussion tools with automatic notification of new posts</li> <li>● Automated self-check exercises</li> </ul> <p><b>Hybrid and Synchronous Courses:</b> Examples of tools that support learners in real-time interaction include web-conferencing software, breakout rooms, simulations, virtual reality technology, and others. Look for a statement in the course that describes the technology learners will use to interact in real time.</p>
<p><b>SRS 6.3: A variety of technology is used in the course.</b></p>	<p>1</p>	<p>The course uses a variety of technology tools, such as videos, discussion forums, social media, mobile technologies, games, simulations, blogs, podcasts, and virtual worlds. Variety does not refer to a specific number, but indicates that different types of aligned technology are used in the course.</p> <p>Technology includes a wide array of different hardware, software, subscriptions, and plug-ins.</p> <p>Examples that illustrate the variety of available technology may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Instructor-created videos</li> <li>● Synchronous web conferencing tools used for orientation, group projects, tutoring, test reviews, etc.</li> <li>● A mobile application that learners use to identify plants in a botany course</li> <li>● Group collaboration tools such as journals, blogs, and documents</li> </ul>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An animation that demonstrates something not feasible to demonstrate in the physical world, such as a process or procedure that takes place inside a hazardous or inaccessible place</li> <li>● A simulation replicating laboratory activities that allows manipulations of objects on the screen in a way that is similar to hands-on lab experiences</li> <li>● Self-assessment tools that provide immediate feedback</li> <li>● Web-based voice tools used by language instructors and learners to practice pronunciation, vocabulary, etc.</li> <li>● Software used for statistical analysis</li> </ul> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for evidence of the use of technologies to ensure the course is not text-based only and evidence that a variety of technology is used. In some courses, learners cannot access tools that require high bandwidth. Check the Course Worksheet to determine whether the course has such limitations.</p>
<p><b>SRS 6.4: The course provides learners with information on protecting their data and privacy.</b></p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Course design, tool usage, and settings can enhance learner privacy. Steps learners can take to protect their privacy with course activities, tool usage, and interactions with others are provided. Tools used in the course (both instructor-selected and institutionally integrated) include links to the privacy policies provided by the creators of the tools.</p> <p>Consider the distinction between tool-enabled learning activities that require privacy policies and those that do not. For example, a course includes links to videos on YouTube for learners to watch. In this case, a privacy policy is not necessary because learners are watching videos and do not have to log in to do so. In a course that requires learners to create and post videos, learners must create accounts on a video-hosting site (e.g., YouTube or Vimeo), and a link to the privacy policies of the video-hosting sites is provided.</p> <p>A single statement about institutionally provided tools can identify all of the tools the institution has vetted as compliant with the institution’s policy on learner data privacy. For tools not vetted by the institution but chosen by the instructor, links to privacy policies are provided in the course. If the course uses proctoring software for quizzes and/or exams, learners are provided with clear information on how their privacy will be protected.</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
		<p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for links to privacy policies and measures taken to protect learner data.</p> <p>Examples of privacy provisions reviewers may look for in the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Links to institutional policies related to safeguarding the privacy of learners when cameras are utilized as part of the course experience</li> <li>● Information for learners to protect their privacy while using course technologies (e.g., web conferencing, online discussions, external tools, etc.)</li> <li>● Privacy policies for publisher resources and integrations</li> <li>● Links to the privacy policies of social media and third-party websites being used</li> <li>● Links to the privacy policies of external tools integrated into the LMS, such as plagiarism detection tools, messaging tools, collaboration tools, and assistive technology</li> <li>● Statements noting that a privacy policy does not exist for the tool</li> <li>● Provisions for the creation and use of a closed group on social media sites</li> <li>● Permission for learners to use pseudonyms in place of real names with any public tools outside the LMS</li> <li>● Texting tool settings that do not allow learners to see one another’s phone numbers</li> </ul>

General Standard	Overview Statement
<p><b>General Standard 7 – Learner Support:</b> The course facilitates learner access to institutional support services essential to learner success.</p>	<p>It is important to ensure online learners know they have access to and are encouraged to use the services that support learners at the institution. In the Learner Support Standard, four different kinds of support services are addressed: technical support, accessibility support, academic support services and resources, and student services and resources.</p>

Specific Review Standard	Points	Annotation
<p><b>SRS 7.1: The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to obtain it.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Technical support for learners differs from institution to institution and includes such information as how to log in, how to use the tools and features of the learning management system; and how to get help desk support. Technical support does not include help with course content or assignments or academic support services or student support services (see Specific Review Standards 7.3 and 7.4).</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for evidence that learners have access to technical support services from within the course or the learning management system. The purpose is not to review the adequacy of those services at an institutional level but rather to determine if technical support services are provided for learners and that the course contains information about the services and how to access them.</p> <p>Courses with externally provided resources, such as publisher sites or materials, include directions for obtaining assistance if the resources are not supported by the institution's internal technical support.</p> <p>Examples of information about technical support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A clear description of the technical support services provided by the institution, including a link to a technical support website</li> <li>● An email link and/or phone number to access the institution's technical support center or help desk</li> <li>● Links to tutorials or other resources providing instructions on how to use the tools and features of the learning management system and other course technologies</li> <li>● A link to "frequently asked questions"</li> <li>● Information for learners with no or limited access to technology, including free or low-cost resources related to internet connectivity and hardware/software needs</li> </ul>
<p><b>SRS 7.2: Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Accessibility policies or accommodation statements state that services and accommodations are available for learners with disabilities and inform the learner how such services may be obtained.</p>

<p><b>policies and accommodation services.</b></p>		<p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for evidence that learners have access to accessibility policies and services from within the course or learning management system. The purpose is not to review the adequacy of these services and resources on an institutional level but rather to determine if accessibility support services and resources are provided for learners and if the course contains information about the services and how to access them.</p> <p>To meet this Specific Review Standard, the course may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A link to the institution's accessibility policy, if a policy exists</li> <li>2. Information on how to obtain the institution's accessibility support services, if such services exist; for example, a telephone number or link for the accessibility services office</li> </ol> <p>If the institution does not have an accessibility policy or accommodation services, the instructor may provide a policy that will be adhered to in the course to ensure that learners with disabilities are accommodated.</p> <p><i>Meeting this QM Specific Review Standard does not guarantee or imply that local, state, or national regulations are met.</i></p>
<p><b>SRS 7.3: Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's academic support services and resources that can help learners succeed in the course.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Academic support services and resources, and the scope of what they entail, differ from institution to institution. For the purposes of review, academic support services and resources may include an online orientation, access to library resources, a readiness assessment or survey, testing services, tutoring, non-native language services, writing and/or math centers, supplemental instruction programs, teaching assistants, and tutorials or other forms of guidance on activities such as conducting research, writing papers, citing sources, using an online writing lab, and using course-specific technology.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for evidence that learners have access to academic support services and resources from within the course or the learning management system. The purpose is not to review the adequacy of these services and resources on an institutional level but rather to determine if academic support services and resources are provided for learners and if the course contains information about the services and how to access them.</p>

		<p>Examples of features that connect learners with academic support services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Links to information about academic support services provided by the institution, including details such as the location of a testing center or proctored test sites, hours of operation, phone numbers, and email addresses for key personnel</li> <li>● Links to online orientations or demo courses</li> <li>● A link to the library, including information on how to gain access to library materials and databases and how to contact a librarian</li> <li>● A link to tutorials or guides on conducting research, writing papers, and citing sources</li> </ul> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> Institutionally available academic support services may be limited to matriculated learners. Check the Course Worksheet to determine whether academic support services are available to learners. If they are not, the Specific Review Standard is marked as “Met.”</p>
<p><b>SRS 7.4: Course instructions articulate or link to the institution’s student services and resources that can help learners succeed.</b></p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Student services and resources differ from institution to institution. For the purposes of this review, support services and resources include advising, registration, financial aid, veterans’ services, student or campus life, mental health counseling, career services, online workshops, student organizations, and department services and resources.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for evidence that learners have access to support services from within the course or the learning management system. The purpose is not to review the adequacy of the services on an institutional level but rather to determine if information about support services and how to obtain them is provided in the course.</p> <p>The course may provide the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A description of support services and how to obtain them (including email addresses and phone numbers for key personnel)</li> <li>● Guidance on when and how learners may obtain a particular support service or resource (for example, when and how to meet with an academic advisor)</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links to each of the institution’s student support services web pages or a single student support web page detailing each of the institution’s student support services</li> </ul> <p><b>Continuing Education Courses:</b> Institutionally available student services may be limited to matriculated learners. Check the Course Worksheet to determine whether student services are available to learners. If they are not, the Specific Review Standard is marked as “Met.”</p>
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<b>General Standard</b>	<b>Overview Statement</b>
<p><b>General Standard 8 – Accessibility and Usability:</b> The course design reflects a commitment to accessibility and usability for diverse learners.</p>	<p>The course design utilizes principles of accessibility and usability, reflecting a commitment to ensuring diverse learners can access course content and activities and can easily navigate and interact with course components.</p> <p><i>Meeting QM Specific Review Standards regarding accessibility does not guarantee or imply that the specific accessibility regulations of any country are met.</i></p>

<b>Specific Review Standard</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
<p><b>SRS 8.1: Course navigation facilitates ease of use.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Navigation refers to the process of planning, controlling, and recording the movement of a learner from one place to another in the online course. Navigation throughout the course is consistent, logical, and efficient. <b>Reviewers</b>, confirm that the course’s navigation strategies facilitate ease of movement through the course and course activities.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, also consider the ownership of the design of course navigation features. Some course navigation is set within the learning management system and cannot be modified (e.g., “next” and “previous” buttons or links). The Course Worksheet provides information about navigation features that cannot be changed. Other navigation-related items, such as hyperlinked text, may be within the control of the instructor.</p>

		<p>The Specific Review Standard is met if the course’s navigation strategies create an easy path for learners to follow.</p> <p>Examples of strategies that make a course easy to navigate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consistent layout and design are employed throughout, making content, instructional materials, tools, and media easy to locate from anywhere in the course.</li> <li>● Design elements, like icons and titles of recurring activities, are used repetitively, increasing predictability and intuitiveness.</li> <li>● Hyperlinks use self-describing and meaningful names; for example, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">“Quality Matters website”</a> is the hyperlink rather than <a href="http://www.qualitymatters.org">www.qualitymatters.org</a>.</li> <li>● Icons used as links also have HTML tags or an accompanying text link.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Underlining is used only for hyperlinks.</li> <li>● Links within the course, external and internal, are working properly; there are no broken links.</li> <li>● The course provides clear navigation instructions when a third-party platform is inconsistent with course navigation.</li> <li>● Project segments are numbered and interlinked; (e.g., part 1 of a three-part assignment links directly to parts 2 and 3 so that the learner does not need to navigate back to a main page or view).</li> <li>● A table of contents is included in a long document to allow learners to move easily throughout the file.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SRS 8.2: The course design facilitates readability.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Course design elements maximize usability by facilitating readability and minimizing distractions.</p> <p>Readability is a measure of how easy it is to read and follow content. Readability includes content presentation as well as clarity and legibility of text.</p>

		<p>This Specific Review Standard is met if course content is clearly presented and organized in a manner that is easy to read and follow. <b>Reviewers</b>, determine if the content can be easily read.</p> <p>Examples of readability related to content organization and presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Similar content is grouped together.</li> <li>● Heading and body styles are consistent throughout the course.</li> <li>● White space or negative space is used around content to help increase comprehension and reduce eye fatigue that occurs with large blocks of text, multiple images, or embedded media.</li> <li>● Learning activity and assessment instructions are presented in a consistent manner (e.g., common headers of “instructions,” “grading information,” and “submission instructions”).</li> <li>● Naming conventions are consistent across the course (e.g., all references to Midterm 2 are "Midterm 2" rather than “Exam #2”).</li> </ul> <p>Examples of readability related to text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Editing and proofreading errors (spelling, grammar, punctuation, word choice, syntax) are minimal.</li> <li>● Text is formatted to serve specific instructional purposes. For example, text color or font is used purposely to communicate key points, group like items, and emphasize relevant relationships.</li> <li>● Font style and size maximize on-screen legibility; simpler fonts are used over more ornate fonts.</li> <li>● Text is in a contrasting color that makes it clearly distinguishable from the background.</li> <li>● Underlined text is only used for hyperlinks.</li> </ul> <p>This Specific Review Standard may not be met if:</p>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colors are used arbitrarily, creating distraction and a lack of readability. Color alone is used to convey meaning.</li> <li>• Grammar and syntax errors are numerous and create distraction.</li> <li>• Content is composed of large blocks of text without white space or negative space to help differentiate various components of the content.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SRS 8.3: Text in the course is accessible.</b></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Text may be found in files, documents, slides, learning management system (LMS) pages, and websites. Reviewers can use accessibility tools and checkers to assist in the review of the accessibility of the text.</p> <p>When the text in a course is accessible, learners benefit. For example, any learner can search an accessible PDF for keywords. Most learners can access content, complete activities, and interact with others without the need for accommodations.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for evidence of accessible text using the examples below. (Whether accommodations might be provided by the institution is not relevant to the application of Specific Review Standard 8.3 as text is still reviewed for accessibility. [See Specific Review Standard 7.2 to ensure accessibility services are made available to learners.])</p> <p>A strategy for the review of accessible text is to divide the text content among the individual reviewers and then bring the individual findings back to the team to determine if the course as a whole has accessible text. Another strategy is to review for the accessibility of text as part of the review of other Specific Review Standards.</p> <p>Examples of accessible text may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Text is discoverable as text instead of as images. (Images that have text are reviewed with Specific Review Standard 8.4)</li> <li>• Heading styles (Heading 1, Heading 2, etc.) are used and are placed in an order that communicates the hierarchy of material in a page or document. The headings do not merely use text formatting (e.g., a larger or bold or italic font) to indicate the importance of content or separation of sections.</li> <li>• Text colors alone are not relied on to convey meaning. Meaning is also conveyed in another way that does not require perceiving different colors.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tables are used to organize information or data. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tables in documents are set up as text and not embedded as images. They are not presented as screen captures. <b>Reviewers</b>, select an individual cell (if you cannot do so, it is an image), and then use Tab to ensure you can navigate from left to right.</li> <li>● Tables are set up with headings for columns, and rows and are used only for summarizing data, not for formatting. Tables have captions, alt-text, or alt attributes-tags, and are formatted so that headings repeat.</li> <li>● Merged cells are avoided, as they cannot be matched with the relevant row and column headers.</li> <li>● Captions, alt-text, and/or long descriptions provide context for the table.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● PDFs that contain text are not image scans; any text contained in PDFs is selectable and searchable. <b>Reviewers</b>, select a sentence or paragraph; if you are unable to do so, the PDF is not accessible. If the PDF is a fillable form, use the tab key to ensure the cursor moves in a logical order.</li> </ul> <p>For additional information on course accessibility, consult resources such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), and WebAIM.</p> <p>The Specific Review Standard is met if 85% of the course text is fully accessible. Content developed by publishers is included in the review of this Specific Review Standard.</p>
<p><b>SRS 8.4: Images in the course are accessible.</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Images that are meaningful to the learning experience include alternative text (alt-text), long descriptions, or other means of description. Images that are decorative are marked as such.</p> <p>Images can be found in narrated slide presentations, web pages, documents, and within the LMS pages.</p> <p>Images, include, photographs, charts, graphs, infographics, maps, etc.</p> <p>When images in a course are accessible, most learners benefit. For example, alt-text can provide a description if the image cannot load due to limited internet bandwidth, or long</p>

		<p>descriptions and figure captions can guide learners through a complex visual.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, verify the accuracy of the alternate content provided. Verification is important, as not all attempts to provide alternative formats meet the goal of providing equivalent access for diverse learners. For example, if the alt-text does not include the equivalent textual information presented in an image, some learners will not have equivalent access to the material.</p> <p>The Specific Review Standard is met if 85% of the images are accessible. Content developed by publishers is included in the review of this Specific Review Standard.</p> <p>Examples of alternative means of access for images:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An infographic has alt-text describing the basic parts of the infographic, moving from more general to more detailed. <b>Reviewers</b>, check the object properties to confirm alt-text.</li> <li>• A map includes alt-text describing the key elements of the map (e.g., the purpose, timeframe, directional information, etc.).</li> <li>• The decorative border images in an assignment description indicate in the alt-text that they are decorative and are bypassed by screen readers. <b>Reviewers</b>, look for alt-text to include two sets of quotation marks with no content between them (""") to indicate decorative alt-text, sometimes called "null" alt-text.</li> <li>• The diagram of a circuit is described in the figure caption, guiding the learner through the path of the circuit. <b>Reviewers</b>, look for figure captions visible on the page or document.</li> <li>• A line graph has a long description that includes the title of the graph, the x- and y-axis labels, and the axes' ranges and then summarizes the trends of the lines. <b>Reviewers</b>, a long description may be embedded in HTML, or it may be provided below the content with a descriptive link to another location (e.g., "Detailed description of image").</li> </ul> <p>For additional information, consult resources such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), and WebAIM.</p>
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<p><b>SRS 8.5: Video and audio content in the course is accessible.</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Video and audio content can be found in videos, podcasts, narrated slide presentations, animations, simulations, and other multimedia. Video and audio content includes alternative means of access for learners through the addition of captions or transcripts with equivalent information.</p> <p>When video and audio in a course is accessible, most learners benefit. For example, any learner can enable closed captions and read the transcript when their environment is loud or when there is a need to be quiet. Most learners are able to access content, complete activities, and interact with others without the need for accommodations.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, look for evidence of accessible video and audio, not for the availability of accommodations. (Also see Specific Review Standard 7.2.)</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, verify the accuracy of the alternate content provided. Verification is important, as not all attempts to provide alternative formats meet the goal of providing equivalent access for diverse learners. For example, auto-generated captions may not have correct capitalization or punctuation, non-speech information may not be conveyed, or meaningful sound effects may be missing.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, if the audio content corresponds with the video content in a way that conveys meaning, then the captions are timed correctly (synchronized) to the visual content so learners may obtain both the context and the content and thus have an equivalent experience.</p> <p>For audio-only content, such as podcasts or instructor lectures without visuals, a text transcript is sufficient.</p> <p>The Specific Review Standard is met if 85% of the video and audio content is accessible. Content developed by publishers is included in the review of this Specific Review Standard.</p> <p>Examples of alternative means of access for different types video or audio content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A video demonstrating how to operate a piece of equipment includes accurate captions.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>SRS 8.6: Multimedia in the course is easy to use.</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Multimedia includes the use or integration of various types of media such as images, audio, video, animations, and interactive components.</p> <p>Interactive elements integral to the content are cross-platform (PC, Mac) and cross-browser, or guidance is provided about the best browser to use. Learners are notified of any limitations, such as the need for specific browsers or high bandwidth requirements.</p> <p>High quality multimedia includes visual content that can be resized without loss of details and audio that can be clearly distinguished from background noise. Audio or video players include controls such as pause, forward, rewind, resize, etc.</p> <p><b>Reviewers</b>, focus on the usability of multimedia in the course. This Specific Review Standard is met if course multimedia is easy to view, operate, and interpret.</p> <p>Examples of strategies that facilitate the usability of multimedia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An animation of how a pump works includes player controls so learners can pause and resize the multimedia. When it is resized, the animations continue to be clear and distinct.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learners are informed that an online lab will work only with specific browsers.</li> <li>● Images on the first page of each module do not take up the entire screen and scale for smaller screens.</li> <li>● Podcasts have clear, distinct audio.</li> <li>● A long video is broken into segments of less than 20 minutes, ideally 6- to 9-minute logical segments.</li> <li>● A documentary streams smoothly without frequent interruptions and, though 30 minutes long, includes player controls and bookmarks at the start of each segment.</li> <li>● A video demonstrating sign language indicates that high bandwidth is required for learners to accurately discern hand shapes and movement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SRS 8.7: Vendor accessibility statements are provided for the technologies used in the course.</b></p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Learners have access to information on the accessibility of technologies used in the course, including the learning management system.</p> <p>This Specific Review Standard is met if the course includes a link to the vendor accessibility statement for each technology. If an accessibility statement does not exist for a particular technology, a statement is provided that the accessibility statement does not exist, along with contact information for the vendor.</p> <p>Examples of technologies that require an accessibility statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A learning management system, including integrated third-party software</li> <li>● Publisher materials or platforms</li> <li>● Plagiarism detection software</li> <li>● Presentation software</li> <li>● Web conferencing tools</li> <li>● Polling tools</li> <li>● A lecture-capture system</li> <li>● Media players</li> <li>● A document-sharing system</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social media tools</li> <li>● Laboratory or shop technologies</li> <li>● Mobile applications (apps)</li> <li>● Interactive activity platforms</li> </ul> <p>Examples of where the accessibility statements may be linked or located within the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The course syllabus</li> <li>● A page on required technology software</li> <li>● A page on resources</li> <li>● An institutionally managed web page that includes anchored links to the accessibility statements for technologies used in the course</li> </ul>
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Not For Circulation