Practice Exercise

Using the *Technological* Checklist Items to Evaluate an Existing Site

Use the Technological Checklist to evaluate a course of your choice.

Tip: You may want to use the site Search tool and enter a key word (for example, "hardware" Or "Tech Requirements" to more quickly locate information to answer a survey item.

Does the course have orientation programs that provide technical training to students before starting the course?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable
- ❑ Other (specify)

Does the institution have personnel who can assist learners in setting up their computers before starting the course?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Is the course Website hosted on course provider's own system?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

If *no*, check all that apply
- ❑ Hosted on a commercial system (with monthly fee)
- ❑ Hosted on an outside system (free of charge)
- ❑ Other (specify)

Does the course provide the following information about its institution's networks to learners?
- ❑ Bandwidth capacity
- ❑ Limitations of its networks
- ❑ Not applicable
- ❑ Other (specify)

Is there a "buddy system" established in the course so that learners will have at least one person who they can call to do some preliminary troubleshooting or just ask advice?
- ❑ Yes

❑ No
❑ Other (specify)

What happens to a pre-scheduled exam or chat when the server is down?
❑ Exam or chat is rescheduled
❑ Exam or chat is postponed until the server is up and running
❑ Exam is done offline
❑ Not applicable
❑ Not sure
❑ Other(specify)

Does the course provide e-mail accounts to students?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable
If *yes*, specify the storage space or disk quota per student:

If some students do not have enough computer expertise or skills to participate in the course, does the course offer any training sessions or direct students to appropriate resources so that they can get the necessary skills to fully participate in the various activities of the course?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable
❑ Other (specify)

Are the minimum capabilities (e.g., browser, software compatibility, data transfer speeds) for an adequate Internet service provider specified in the course?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Is there any financial aid available for students to purchase the necessary technology required for the course?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable
Has the institution created any reusable and shareable learning objects (LOs)?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable
If *yes*, check all that apply
    ❑ Individuals within institution can use without permission (free of charge)
    ❑ Individuals within institution can use with permission (free of charge)

- ❑ Individuals outside the institution can use without permission (free of charge)
- ❑ Individuals outside the institution can use with permission (free of charge)
- ❑ Individuals outside the institution can use (with fees)
- ❑ Other (specify)

Is there a search facility to search for various learning objects within the institution?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Can learning objects available in the institution be used by outsiders?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

If *yes*, check all that apply:
- ❑ Anyone can use without the permission from the institution
- ❑ Cannot use without the permission of the institution
- ❑ Can use with a fee
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Not applicable

Is the cost of required hardware, software and the types of Internet connection (e.g., T1, DSL, cable modem, etc.) a deterrent to taking this course?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Are students given specific guidelines on how much computer expertise they need to have to participate in the course? (For example, a list of things they should know how to do on the Internet)
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Does the course provide any recommendations on best place(s) to buy various hardware components required for the course? (Note: Any such recommendations must be done without any bias or preference. A survey of learners on such issues can be conducted and the results can be posted on the course Website. Also, reviews of hardware from magazines can be useful in this regard. Neither the instructor nor the institution should endorse or promote any particular product. However, if a hardware company is a sponsor or has special arrangement with the institution to offer special prices for students, then it is a different issue.)
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Does the course inform students about the video clips or streaming media[1] (if any) used in the course may not run effectively with a slow modem?

❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the course allow learners to choose any of the following connection speeds for any streaming media used in the course? (Note: With most production software, one can output for different connection speeds. However, if various connection speed options are not provided, Powell (2001) recommends that designers stream media at a low data rate so that individuals with low connection speed can view it).

❑ 28.8 K
❑ 56K
❑ T1
❑ Not applicable

Are the software requirements for the course clearly stated?

❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

If *yes*, indicate specific software name and check all that apply:

Software	Software Name	Required For			Recommended For			NA
		Learner	Instructor	Other	Learner	Instructor	Other	
Word Processor								
Email Package								
Presentation Program								
Spreadsheets								
Database								
Graphic Software								
eBook Reader Software								
Audio Video Editing Software								
Operating System								
Plug-ins								
Browsers								
Other (specify)								

Does the course add any new software not originally listed in the technology requirement for the course? (Note: Sometimes, instructor may add a new software after the course is started. This may not be well received by some students as it was not listed before.)

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[1] Streaming media (streaming audio or video): Audio or video files played as they are being downloaded over the Internet instead of users having to wait for the entire file to download first. Requires a media player program. (Source: http://www.learningcircuits.org/glossary.html#S)

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

If *yes*, are the learners informed?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable
- ❑ Other

Are any browser "plug-ins" needed to use the pages?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

If *yes*, are they commonly used and free (such as Acrobat)?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

If plug-ins are necessary, is there a link to download them?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable
- ❑ Other (specify)

Does the course provide links to resources where learners can learn more about required software and their pricing?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Does the course provide links to resources where all necessary software can be downloaded or purchased?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

If there are applets or other software to download, does the course specify operating system, memory, CPU and bandwidth requirements?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Is the course developed using any of the following software? (check all that apply):
- ❑ LMS

- ❑ LCMS
- ❑ Authoring software
- ❑ Other (specify)

If *yes*, check if the software is in compliance with any of the following standards. (check all that apply):

- ❑ Institute for Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE)
- ❑ Instructional Management Systems (IMS)
- ❑ AICC (Aviation Industry CBT Committee)
- ❑ SCORM (Sharable Courseware Object Reference Model)
- ❑ All of the above
- ❑ Other (describe below)

Are there any criteria used to select LMS, LCMS or the authoring tool? (Note: An article entitled "Selecting a Learning Management System" is available at: http://www.e-learninghub.com/articles/learning_management_system.html. Also, a resources site entitled "Selecting and Using Tools" is available at: http://www.e-learningcentre.co.uk/eclipse/Resources/default-selecting.htm provides information about LMS, LCMS and authoring tools.).

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable
- ❑ Other (specify)

Does the LMS, LCMS or other software used in creating the course work with newer versions of variety browsers?

- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No