A CHECKLIST TO ASSESS THE QUALITY OF AN E-LEARNING COURSE

This checklist can be used to help assess the quality of off-the-shelf e-learning courses before purchase, self-assess an e-learning course you are currently developing or the quality of e-learning courses on your LMS.

Some of the checklist inclusions relate to 'hygiene' maters, such as congruence of colour, navigation, font etc. These are important matters as they reduce the cognitive effort required of the learner to interpret what's on the screen. Other checklist inclusions relate to learning design.

If you answer 'No' to any of the following parameters, be sure to weigh up the compromise you are making.

NOTE: Some of the elements listed below are dictated by the authoring tool used to build the e-learning course being reviewed.

	Yes	Sometimes/ not sure	No
Graphic User Interface (GUI)			
The GUI is the base template that surrounds the e-learning content.			
The GUI is consistent throughout and uncluttered.			
The GUI look/feel blends with the visual design of the course itself.			
The GUI is consistent with e-learning courses already on the organisation's Learning Management System (LMS).			
The GUI contains the navigation items required throughout the course.			
Navigation			
The navigation includes any buttons, tabs or hyperlinks within the e-learning course that the learner uses to move around the course.			
The navigation is WCAG 2.0 web accessibility compliant.			
The navigation is intuitive, simple to use and uncluttered. Extraneous navigation has been removed.			
The navigation is predictable. It is consistent in position, name and function throughout.			
There is a navigatable menu available to the learner throughout the course, to help learners interpret the structure and themes of the course.			
There are no more than two levels of menu (Topic, Sub-topic).			
The navigation throughout the course includes: Menu/Back/Forward/Replay/Progress/Transcript/Volume/Help/Glossary (if required)/Resources/Exit.			
The navigation is consistent with e-learning courses already on the LMS.			

Reference: www.elearningacademy.com.au/blog/2013/05/a-checklist-for-quality-elearning-courses

	Yes	Sometimes/ not sure	No
Visual design			
Visual design includes the look and feel of the course itself, image type and treatment, and use of whitespace. The aim is to ensure each screen is easy and interesting to interpret and learn from.			
The visual appeal of the course is maintained throughout.			
Graphics are appropriately used throughout to help learners develop a mental model of the content.			
The visual design is simple, uncluttered, and clear.			
Illustrations are used to support learning and reduce text burden.			
Text describing a graphic is located proximal to the graphic, to reduce visual scanning.			
Elements of other organisational artefacts relating to the topic (posters, intranet pictures etc) are integrated into the visual design to create congruence between the course and organisational key messages.			
Instructional approach			
Instructional approach is the approach employed to help the learner learn, assimilate and apply the course content.			
The learning objectives are overt and simple to interpret. Ideally, no more than 5 learning objectives per course.			
The learning objectives are represented by a repeated key message that learners can readily assimilate.			
The learning objectives are reflected in the topic headings.			
The learning objectives are reflected in the learning activities.			
Content is appropriately chunked and sequenced into a logical flow of information.			
The course is no longer than 20 minutes in duration.			
Instructions and prompts are unambiguous and consistent throughout.			
Unfamiliar terms are described and then used consistently throughout.			
Learning activities are frequently used to make obvious an imperative or gap in knowledge before the content is 'taught'.			
Learning activities are appropriately debriefed.			
Where appropriate, learners can navigate freely, to enable exploration and choice.			
The content is couched in scenarios to elicit familiar workplace activities and situations.			
Interactivity			
Interactivity is used throughout the course to involve and engage the learner in active learning. It calls a learner to action.			
The interactivity within the course is purposeful. It emphasises critical content and helps the learner to develop judgement. e.g. scenario decision-making, problem-solving and workplace action plans.			
The interactivity within the course adds interest and dimension.			
The interactivity emphasises the value of learning the course content.			
The interactivity creates a memorable experience about the content.			
The e-learning course does not use 'click and reveal' of text.			
There are no functional errors.			

	Yes	Sometimes/ not sure	No
Use of narration/text			
Narration/text refers to the approach taken to impart the course content to the learner.			
The narration/text style helps reduce barriers between the learner and the course.			
The narration/text is clear, concise, unambiguous and to the point.			
Jargon is avoided or described before being used.			
Narration is used to supplement copious text on screen, to help learners process difficult content.			
Text on screen is not narrated verbatim.			
Narration and corresponding animation is presented simultaneously.			
Text written on screen is easy to read.			
Conversational 'Plain English' is used throughout.			
Lots of white space is used to help learners scan text.			
Headers and font are consistent throughout.			
The font is dark against a white background.			
There are no spelling mistakes or space inconsistencies.			
Assessment			
Assessment is the technique used to check the learner's understanding of the content.			
A variety of self-assessment types is placed throughout the course to enable the learner to assess personal mastery and gain confidence prior to the formal assessment.			
Formal assessment questions reflect the original learning objectives.			
Assessment questions are scenario-based, where possible.			
A variety of LMS trackable assessment types are used: • 'True/false' to assess information retrieval • 'Multiple choice with multiple or single response' to assess accuracy of concepts • 'Place in order' to assess sequence-type knowledge • 'Drag and drop' for name/action associations • 'Hot spot' to test placement			
Cultural fit			
Cultural fit refers to the congruence of the e-learning course to the norms and values of the organisation.			
The GUI reflects the organisation's style guide.			
The 'tone' of the text/narration reflects the organisation's culture.			
Any bias to specific employee groups is avoided.			
The visual design is reflective of the workplace culture and activities.			
The visual design is reflective of the organisation's messaging about the topic at hand.			