



Institute of IT Training

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR e-LEARNING PROVIDERS

A guidance document for e-Learning Providers





Code of Practice for IT e-Learning providers

© 2007 Institute of IT Training

Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the information in this report is accurate. No warranty can be given that this is so, nor can the information be relied upon as a representation under the Misrepresentations Act 1967.

Version: 1.01

Published by

Institute of IT Training
Westwood House
Westwood Business Park
Coventry CV4 8HS
Tel: 0845 006 8858
Email: info@iitt.org.uk
Web: www.iitt.org.uk



The Institute of IT Training
is a division of the
National Computing Centre

CONTENTS

DEFINITIONS	4
PUBLICITY & PROMOTION	5
COURSE INFORMATION	5
LEARNING MATERIALS STANDARDS	7
THIRD PARTY STANDARDS	7
DEVELOPER COMPETENCIES	8
TUTOR COMPETENCIES	8
EXTERNAL CONTROLS	8
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE	8

Code of Practice for e-Learning providers

IT users in the UK benefit from one of the most advanced IT training environments anywhere in the world. In general, e-Learning Providers provide a value-for-money range of quality training products and services to their client organisations. However, in a business environment which is ever-increasingly competitive, it is important for e-learning providers to align to best-practice and be able to demonstrate that they provide the client organisation with top quality and cost effective training products and services.

It is an Institute objective to assist in the raising of standards in IT training across the board, and the e-Learning Provider Accreditation Programme (ELPAP) is a key component of this. Note that the ELPAP accredits the company: it does NOT accredit individual courses.

This Code of Practice provides the basis for the Institute of IT Training's e-Learning Provider Accreditation Programme through which the Institute will maintain and monitor a register of approved providers. Organisations which undertake voluntarily to abide by the terms of this Code of Practice and can demonstrate that they do so are eligible to be accredited by the Institute.

Definitions

In this code of practice:

- 'Learning' means the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes through a formalised process including (1) desired outcomes, (2) activities designed to bring about these outcomes and (3) assessment of outcomes.
- 'e-Learning' means the delivery of learning with the assistance of interactive, electronic technology, whether offline or online.
- 'Client' means any person or organisation that enters into a contract with a Provider for the provision of e-Learning training materials.
- 'Course' means any programme of training which purports to be complete in itself.
- 'Learning materials' means the computer software representing the body of the course materials.
- 'Course' means any programme of training which purports to be complete in itself.
- 'Student' means any person taking a course.
- 'Provider' means any enterprise, institution, organisation or internal department accredited by the IITT as an approved provider of off-the-shelf or bespoke e-Learning materials.

Publicity and promotion

- In promotional literature, advertisements and other forms of promotion, providers shall express themselves clearly and without ambiguity so that the reader may know exactly what is being offered and to what he /she is committing to by responding.
- Providers shall not give false or misleading indications, whether by words, illustrations or other means, in relation to either their products and services or to the products and services of any other training organisations.
- Providers shall not make any statements which cannot readily be substantiated.
- Providers shall not publish any advertisement which may be confused with that of any other training organisation.
- Fictitious testimonials shall not be used, and testimonial; from the provider's own staff, relatives or agents shall not be used unless their interest is explicitly declared. No testimonial shall be used more than three years after the date on which it was written.
- Publicity and promotional material may make reference to this Code of Practice only in such form as the IITT may approve.

Course Information

Prior to a client contracting for the provision of e-Learning products and services, the Provider shall make information available on:

- the titles of the courses and their learning objectives
- the training needs analysis products or services, if any, available from the Provider
- the accreditation, if any, for which the courses are designed to prepare students
- the methods, if any, for evaluating satisfactory completion of the courses
- the subject matter content of the courses
- the estimated study time required to complete each course
- the training or learning models and strategies underpinning the design of the courses
- a profile of the students for whom the courses are designed, including prerequisite and/or desirable experience

- the processes put in place by the Provider to ensure the suitability of learners for courses, prior to acceptance
- the need, if any, for face-to-face or hands-on training in addition to usage of the materials provided
- support to be provided by the client in the development of the courses, including subject-matter expertise, materials, approvals, etc.
- materials that need to be made available separately by the client to students, including books and software packages
- the availability of learner support, whether online or by other means and the response times to be expected
- any requirement for learner support to be provided by the client
- the facilities provided for collaboration between learners, whether online, by telephone or other means
- any facilities for learning management, including registration, student progress tracking and reporting, supplied with the courses
- the technical capabilities required for installation of the courses on the client's own network, including servers, protocols and operating systems supported, required disk space and minimum network bandwidth
- the means by which the courses will be delivered to the client site
- the number of students who can access the course simultaneously (where relevant)
- the technical capabilities required for presentation of the courses, including supported computers, operating systems, processors, browsers or other viewers, plug-ins, screen and colour resolutions; and required memory, hard disk space or sound capabilities
- dates for submission of deliverables and associated acceptance criteria (where relevant)
- payment terms
- the implications of the proposed design (if bespoke materials) or existing implementation (if off-the-shelf materials) for ease of maintenance, customisation and localisation by the Provider, Client and third parties
- other information available by request, including details of subject matter experts, writers and other key personnel used in the development of the courses or in providing learner support.

Learning materials standards

Providers shall ensure that all courses conform to the Institute's e-learning materials standards for:

- integral learner support
- content
- learning design
- pre and post assessment
- navigation
- usability
- media quality
- technical quality

Note that these standards apply only to self-contained e-Learning materials and not the following:

- electronic performance support systems
- assessment systems
- managed learning environments
- synchronous or asynchronous online conferencing systems

If, in addition to providing e-Learning materials, a Provider is a vendor of any of the systems listed above, they shall not misrepresent that their accreditation by the Institute applies also to these systems.

Third-party standards

Where course materials are independent of any managed learning environment and the Provider is supplying the materials on a bespoke basis, the Provider shall, as a matter of good practice, make the Client aware of the issues and implications associated with compliance with current and emerging technical standards for interoperability with managed learning environments.

Where the course materials are supplied on an off-the-shelf basis, the Provider shall:

- draw the Client's attention to the Provider's policies re compliance with current and emerging technical standards for interoperability with managed learning environments and

■ be very specific in describing the extent of compliance with these standards.

Where the Provider is supplying course materials on a bespoke basis, the Provider shall, as a matter of good practice, make the Client aware of the implications of the proposed design for accessibility by those with disabilities.

Where course materials are web-based and are supplied on an off-the-shelf basis, the Provider shall make clear the extent to which the materials do or do not comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium.

Developer competencies

Providers shall ensure that designers and developers of learning materials possess the necessary technical expertise as specified in the Institute's Competencies for e-Learning developers.

Tutor competencies

Providers shall ensure that, where online learner support is provided, tutors have a full and up-to-date knowledge of their subject, an understanding of the principles of adult learning, information and communication technology skills and competencies as defined in the Institute's Competencies for e-tutors.

External controls

The Provider shall make available to the IITT such statistical, documentary and other information as the IITT may reasonably require to be assured that the Code of Practice is being observed.

Providers shall co-operate with scheduled IITT monitoring visits and facilitate access to learning materials by accreditation verifiers.

Complaints procedure

A statement of the procedures for making and responding to complaints shall routinely be made available by Providers to clients with whom they have contracted.

Providers shall respond to client complaints in a prompt and courteous manner.

Should the Provider not satisfy the complaint to the satisfaction of the client, the Provider will advise the client of the right to notify the IITT of the outstanding complaint. A form, together with a Complaints Procedure document, available from the IITT, shall be supplied by the Provider.

Further Information

For further information, please contact the Standards Secretary on 0845 006 8858 or email standards@iitt.org.uk