



COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

# IMPLEMENTING THE UCJ STANDARDS FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION: CASE STUDIES



## LEARNER'S GUIDE



THE  
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL  
OF JAMAICA

*"Assuring Quality in Higher Education"*



# IMPLEMENTING THE UCJ STANDARDS FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION: CASE STUDIES

## LEARNER'S GUIDE



# COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is an intergovernmental organization created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to promote the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources, and technologies.

© 2024 by Commonwealth of Learning and the University Council of Jamaica



*Implementing The UCJ Standards for Distance Education: Case Studies (Learner's Guide)* is made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 License (international):

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

For the avoidance of doubt, by applying this license the Commonwealth of Learning does not waive any privileges or immunities from claims that they may be entitled to assert, nor does the Commonwealth of Learning submit itself to the jurisdiction, courts, legal processes, or laws of any jurisdiction.

This Guide was prepared by the University Council of Jamaica

Published by:

Commonwealth of Learning

4710 Kingsway, Suite 2500

Burnaby, British Columbia Canada V5H4M2

Telephone: +1 604 775 8200

Fax: +1 604 775 8210

Web: [www.col.org](http://www.col.org)

Email: [info@col.org](mailto:info@col.org)

---

# CONTENTS

## Preface

## The UCJ

## Introduction 1

- Using the Cases
- Suggested Delivery Approaches and Duration
- Elements of the Cases

## Case Studies

### Case Study 1 6

Leaders Must Lead ...

### Case Study 2 9

Reset: Back to the Drawing Board at PTTC – Part I

### Case Study 3 12

Reset: Back to the Drawing Board at PTTC – Part II

### Case Study 4 15

MyClass Is Not Top Class

### Case Study 5 18

Insecurity at Supreme College

## References 21

## Appendix 23

Action Plan Template

# PREFACE

The landscape of education has undergone a profound transformation with the advent of distance learning, which has now become an indispensable component of our higher education and training framework. As an increasing number of institutions embrace distance education offerings, there arises a pressing demand for training and support mechanisms to ensure the consistent delivery of high-quality programmes in adherence to the Standards for Distance Education published by the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ).

Initially published in 2014 and subsequently revised in April 2022, the Standards for Distance Education were conceived amidst a surge in interest and utilization of distance learning modalities in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean region. This surge was spurred by the imperative to address educational needs during the challenging times of the COVID-19 Pandemic and its aftermath. The Standards serve as comprehensive guidelines designed to steer institutions in the development and execution of their distance education initiatives. Encompassing various facets of the online learning experience, these standards delineate best practices for course design, student engagement, faculty support, course delivery, and student assessment, with a view toward fostering continuous improvement within institutions.

The present training guide, “Implementing the UCJ Standards for Distance: Case Studies,” embodies a collaborative effort between the UCJ and the Commonwealth of Learning. It has been meticulously crafted to complement the second edition of the Standards for Distance Education, furnishing a practical roadmap for institutions to decipher and apply the implications of each standard effectively. Accompanied by a Learner’s Guide, this training resource is geared towards fortifying the capacities of higher education and training institutions, facilitating the seamless adoption of standards across diverse modes of instruction, including face-to-face, online, blended, and professional learning communities. Adopting a case-based pedagogical approach, the guide furnishes real-world scenarios, empowering learners to identify, explore, and address quality assurance issues pertinent to distance education. Such an approach, aligned with active learning strategies, engenders collaboration, autonomy, and the co-creation of knowledge. Trainers, facilitators, and learners are encouraged to harness this guide as a versatile tool, offering a repository of suggested approaches and resources while allowing for flexibility in implementation.

The UCJ is confident that the learning materials presented herein will emerge as invaluable assets for institutions endeavouring to deliver distance education programmes that resonate with the needs and aspirations of contemporary learners. It is our fervent belief that these resources will significantly bolster the quality assurance framework of distance education, nurturing an educational milieu characterized by dynamism and adaptability.

Our heartfelt gratitude extends to all individuals who contributed to the development of the Facilitator’s Guide and the Learner’s Guide, with special appreciation to Dr. Christopher Clarke, Education Consultant, and the 120 higher education practitioners who actively engaged with the case studies during the four pilot workshops held across the island, providing invaluable feedback for refining the cases.

Althea Heron  
Executive Director  
The University Council of Jamaica



THE  
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL  
OF JAMAICA

*"Assuring Quality in Higher Education"*

## THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF JAMAICA

The University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) was established in October 1987 by the University Council of Jamaica Act, 1987. It is a statutory body currently under the portfolio of the Minister of Education. The UCJ is the National External Quality Assurance Agency for higher education in Jamaica.

### VISION

The UCJ aims to be a Centre of Excellence enabling national, regional and international development through quality assurance in higher education.

### MISSION

The mission of the UCJ is to facilitate and oversee the development and maintenance of a robust higher education quality assurance system.

### VALUES

The UCJ is committed to...

#### 1. Learning & Development:

The Council facilitates the growth and development of individuals, higher education institutions and communities towards a culture of quality.

#### 2. Integrity & Ethics:

The Council believes in objectivity, honesty, the establishment of trust and confidentiality while consistently operating in an ethical manner.

#### 3. Excellence:

The Council believes in the attainment of high quality standards in all aspects of its work.

#### 4. Transparency:

The Council exhibits openness and fairness in its operations.

#### 5. Service:

The Council provides high quality services to all its stakeholders.

#### 6. Respect:

The Council believes in and values the diversity of its stakeholders.

## **FUNCTIONS**

The UCJ is the External Quality Assurance Agency for higher education in Jamaica. The UCJ also functions as an awards and academic development body for higher education institutions and programmes in Jamaica. The following are the main functions of the UCJ:

1. To provide **accreditation** for programmes as well as for institutions by:
  - a. establishing and applying criteria for the accreditation of higher educational programmes and institutions;
  - b. guiding higher education institutions in the development of their Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) systems;
  - c. assisting higher education institutions in the improvement of their educational offerings; and
  - d. encouraging and facilitating the development and delivery of programmes relevant to national needs.
2. To **grant and confer Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and other academic awards and distinctions** to and on persons who have pursued programmes of study approved by the Council at associated higher education institutions.
3. To develop, on an on-going basis, **threshold standards** for different levels of qualifications in various disciplines, at the higher education level.
4. To **research issues** pertaining to quality assurance in higher education with a view to maintaining and improving educational outcomes.
5. To assist in the **development of higher education institutions** by providing professional advice and services for the development and improvement of programmes.
6. To assure the quality of **foreign credentials**.
7. To **facilitate the recognition** of cross-border higher education programmes, and those of awarding bodies being offered in Jamaica.
8. To provide **appropriate public information** about the institutions, programmes and awarding bodies recognised and accredited by the Council.
9. To **monitor** and evaluate higher education programmes and institutions on an on-going basis to facilitate continuous improvement.
10. To **facilitate the free movement** of skills and knowledge within the Caribbean Community.

# INTRODUCTION

The University Council of Jamaica (UCJ), with the support of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), has developed these case studies to improve the capacity of higher education and training institutions to implement the Standards for Distance Education (SDE) for use in face-to-face, online, blended and professional learning communities. The Standards are in their second edition and, while they “retain the central emphasis of the original document on developing and maintaining a robust quality management system to support distance education” (Standards for Distance Education, 2022, p.2), they also take into account current thinking that highlights the importance of active learning, particularly for distance learning.

The second edition of the Standards for Distance Education came at a time of increased interest in, and use of distance education modalities in Jamaica and across the Caribbean region in a bid to meet educational needs during the challenging period of the COVID-19 pandemic and in its aftermath. The need for flexibility in recognition of the ever-changing profile of learners has also played a role in this increased interest and use of distance education modalities. While implementing distance education, however, “some institutions face challenges in assuring quality ... and concerns exist as to whether these programmes are comparable in standards to those offered in the conventional face-to-face setting” (Standards for Distance Education, 2022, p.2). As such, as a companion to the Standards, the goal of this Guide is to enable institutions to (i) interpret the standards; (ii) understand the implications of each standard; and (iii) assess where their institutions are in relation to each standard with a view to improving how they are applied.

As adults, you bring your own experiences to any learning event. These experiences must be taken into account in designing and implementing training, if training is to have its desired effect. Thus, the well-known tenets of andragogy as outlined by Malcolm Knowles (1968) are worth recalling. Adult learners:

1. Are autonomous, independent and self-directed
2. Bring their previous experiences to any new learning experience
3. Learn what they consider to be useful to them
4. Learn what is immediately applicable to their situations
5. Are intrinsically motivated rather than extrinsically motivated
6. Need to know why they are learning something



In addition, the design of the materials has taken into account contributions from scholars and educators who have explored the integration of technology and digital learning with adult learning (Anderson and Elloumi, 2004; Kop, 2011; Nolan, 2023; Siemens, 2005). These scholars have examined how online learning platforms, digital resources and the use of technology can enhance adult learning experiences and provide opportunities for self-directed, collaborative and personalised learning.

This Guide adopts a case-based approach, using scenarios that approximate real-world quality assurance issues in distance education contexts. The case-based approach encourages you, as learners, to identify and explore issues and to find solutions. Thus, it aligns well with active learning strategies that emphasise collaboration and co-construction of meaning. Active learning is a learner-centred approach, then, in which learners must take more responsibility for their learning with instructors or facilitators providing guidance. The use of case studies is but one strategy that supports active learning; others include discussion, role play and problem solving. The case studies included in this Guide incorporate the three other strategies just mentioned and are designed to allow you to exercise independence, analyse and find solutions to quality-related issues, while being guided by an instructor or facilitator. In most applications of cases, there are no right or wrong answers. This is one such application. Contexts and situations differ and what is important is the practicality of the solutions arrived at and their compliance with the Standards for Distance Education.

---

## Using the Cases

There are five cases in this Guide. The cases are intended to facilitate capacity-building among instructional and relevant administrative staff in higher education and training institutions that are implementing the Standards and, as such, the Guide is a companion resource to the Standards. The cases are intended to be used in training group settings and are not for independent study.

It is expected that quality assurance officers in institutions will be responsible for conducting training, targeting personnel responsible for either delivering (lecturers, facilitators) or supporting effective delivery (institution leaders, administrative staff, ICT staff) of courses and programmes in face-to-face, blended or online settings.

As learners, you should bear in mind your role in your institution. While working through the cases, think about the day-to-day operations of your institution or the setting in which you work, and try to arrive at realistic and practical solutions and make workable recommendations.

## A Word or Two on Engagement ... Getting the Most Out of the Cases

- The way to get the most out of this training exercise is to be an active participant. This means making sure to interact with your facilitator and peer trainees as well as with the Standards themselves and your cases.
- To repeat, these cases are designed for group work. So, expect to contribute your ideas freely and respectfully to the group tasks agreed and outlined by your training facilitator. This is your community for this purpose.
- As you work to improve the implementation of distance learning in your setting, you should be willing to explore trends, tools and approaches as they emerge. You may do this by attending seminars and workshops, face to face or online, and through reading reputable blogs and other publications.
- Do find the time to explore the references included in this Guide. They are all useful as you work through the cases and will be useful beyond.
- What comes next? The training exercise is not a one-off event. It may be that a follow-up session is arranged to check on your progress. Do be open to this possibility.

- Whatever your role is in your work setting, you will be expected to follow through on what you learned and on what is required to operationalize or improve implementation of the Standards.
- This could mean making sure to record and document as you go along. There is a sample Action Plan at Appendix I which you are likely to use in the training session. Feel free to modify this or to develop a suitable plan for use outside of the training session, should the need arise.



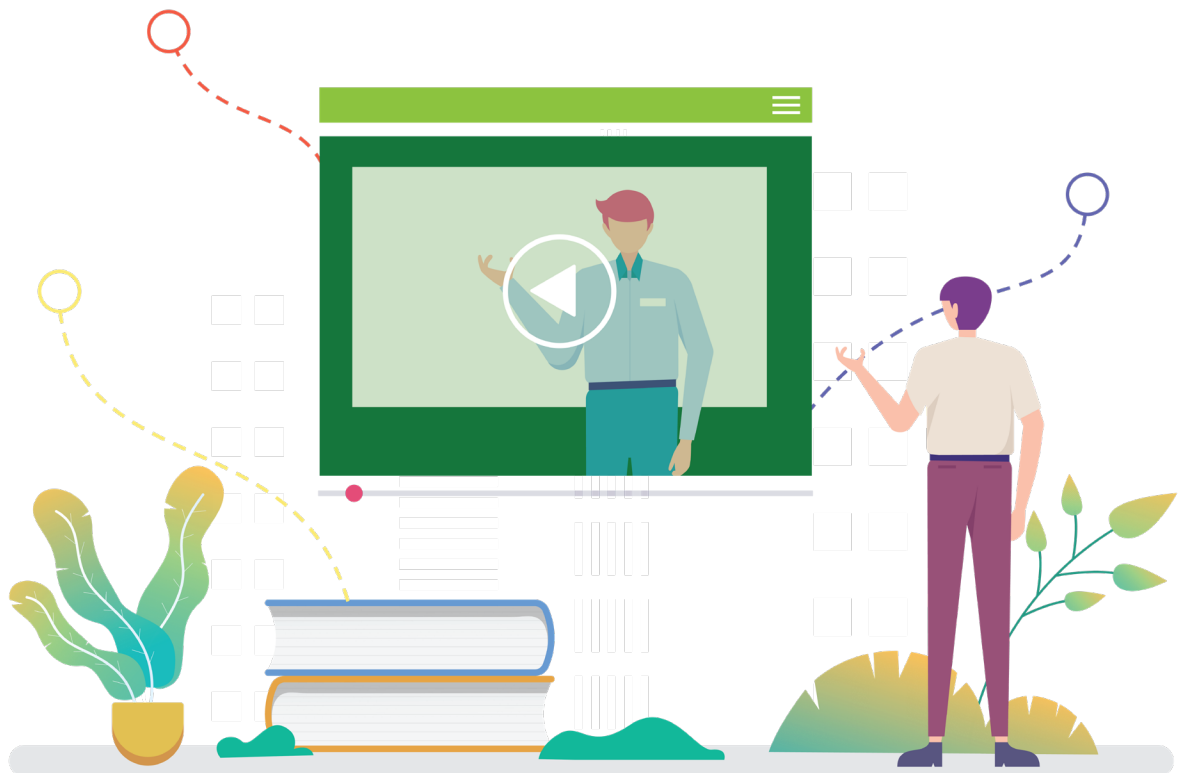
## Elements of the Case

Each case presents a scenario for which a solution is sought. Each has the following features:

1. **Overview:** This is a short preamble to the case intended to contextualise the case and give an idea of what it is about.
2. **Learning Outcomes:** Each case has specific outcomes to be achieved.
3. **Case Narrative:** The full case is presented.
4. **Activities:** Here you will find specific tasks to be done in pursuit of the learning outcomes. Most of the activities are similar across cases. What is implemented will, however, differ.
5. **Linking the Case to the Standards:** A matrix identifies the major quality issues in the case as they relate to the Standards. The list of indicators is not exhaustive, and facilitators and participants are likely to find others. Interrelationship of indicators across criteria will also be evident.



# THE CASES



# CASE STUDY

# 1

## LEADERS MUST LEAD ...



### Overview

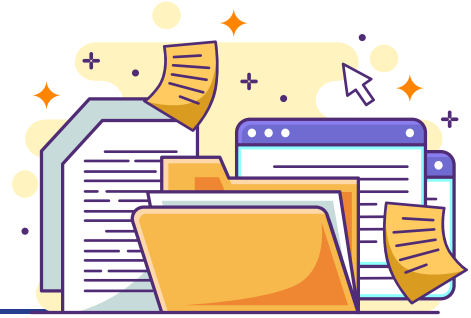
The Principal of Hillview is “in a spot” as his old ways of operating are being disrupted by the Board of Management. The Board is requiring change, change that is to be led by the Principal. He must be involved in conceptualising and planning for Hillview to become a dual mode institution.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the case analysis, you will be able to:

1. Describe the problem/s the case presents
2. Identify the salient or primary issues of the case
3. Determine an appropriate course of action to resolve the problem/s
4. Develop an action plan/implementation plan with timelines
5. Apply Criterion 1 of the Standards for Distance Education to improve online delivery of courses and programmes

## THE CASE



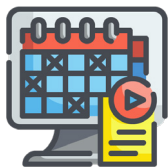
Hillview College was in transition. Its Board of Management had approved an exciting plan that would propel the institution into becoming a dual mode institution catering to both face-to-face and distance learners. The liberal arts college would seek to raise its image and improve its financial standing by attracting students from far and near who saw themselves as future creatives, operating anywhere they decided to be in the global village. As such, a dual mode of delivery was believed to be key to the College's strategic development.

Hillview's Principal had been in charge for 12 years and boasted often that he came from the "old school". He referred to himself as a "dinosaur" when it came to technology and depended on lecturers and administrators for nuggets of information that he believed were sufficient to keep him current as far as technology in education was concerned. Developments in distance and online learning were totally alien to him.

In planning for the future, the Board of Management decreed that all members of staff who would be involved in conceptualising and implementing the changes that would take Hillview to new heights should be involved in updating old policies and drafting new ones related to transforming Hillview into a dual mode institution.

The Board laid out its expectation: Hillview's Principal should lead the process, paying special attention to conceptualising the distance education arm of the institution. Once a draft of the policy documents was completed, an external entity would be contracted to review prior to finalising by the Principal and key personnel.

**The Principal was uncomfortable with this task. What should he do? How would he manage this?**



### Activity – Developing the Action Plan

Participants will work in groups to complete the activity. Each group will analyse the case using the Standards for Distance Education as a guide as well as other resources outlined below or shared by the facilitator. The facilitator and participants will decide how presentations will be made – whether one member of each group or participants given specific roles will deliver the presentation.

1. You run a small consulting firm and have been hired to assist the Principal with the process of developing a plan of action. You and your team members are working on this project.
2. Read Criterion 1 of the Standards for Distance Education (Individual Activity), and make note of the relevant points for this case.
3. Place participants in groups and have them discuss the steps to be taken to develop the plan of action to transform Hillview. A collaborative tool such as Padlet (<https://padlet.com/>) or Miro (<https://miro.com/>), or plain old Post-It stickers on a wall may help participants to share their ideas for how to get the job done.
4. Have the groups identify the documentation that will need to be developed to support each step of the plan. Consult the Standards for help with this.
5. In a table or a matrix, complete the action plan, making sure to include the type or types of document that will guide the actions.
6. Draft the concept brief that will accompany the table or matrix, outlining the guiding principles and policies expected to guide Hillview in its next stages.



## Linking the Case to the Standards

The matrix below shows the quality issues identified in the case and the related standard indicators for each. This will help to guide the discussion.

Case	Criterion	Issue	Standard Indicators
1	Governance	Vision and Mission	1.1.1, 1.1.2
		Qualifications and Experience	1.3.1, 1.3.2
		Fiduciary Responsibility	1.4.1, 1.4.2, 1.4.3
		Policy Formulation and Exercise of Authority	1.5.1, 1.5.2
		Senior Staff	1.6.1, 1.6.2, 1.6.3
		Institutional Plans	1.7.1, 1.7.2
		Quality Assurance System	1.8.1, 1.8.2, 1.8.3

# CASE STUDY

# 2

## RESET: BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD AT PTTC – PART I



### Overview

As educational institutions returned to normalcy after the COVID-19 pandemic abated, Premier Teacher Training College decided to take advantage of the obvious affordances of technology-mediated teaching by using a blended mode of delivery. But problems arose in the new semester when students complained that courses and programmes were not meeting their expectations and they outlined a raft of issues related to course delivery to the Principal. Premier had to go back to the drawing board to rectifying the issues reported.

### Learning Outcomes

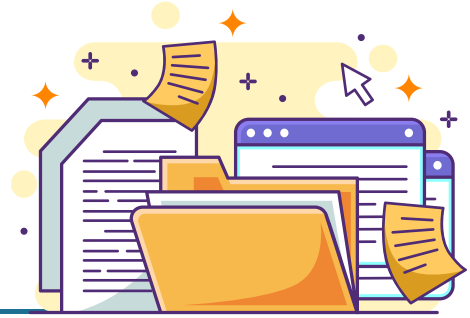
Upon completion of the case analysis, you will be able to:

1. Describe the problem/s the case presents
2. Identify the salient or primary issues of the case
3. Determine an appropriate course of action to resolve the problem/s
4. Develop an action plan/implementation plan, with timelines
5. Apply relevant sections of Criteria 2 and 4 of the Standards for Distance Education to improve delivery of online courses and programmes



## THE CASE

---



Premier Teacher Training College delivered its programmes using the face-to-face modality until COVID-19 Pandemic forced educational institutions to close their doors and deliver classes online. The staff and learners were caught off guard; however, with the help of the ICT Department, plans were quickly put in place for training of lecturers and learners, provision of online tools and platforms, and the provision of support for all stakeholders.

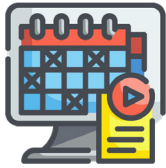
When the COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions were lifted, the Education Ministry instructed that face-to-face classes should resume in educational institutions. Recognising the advantages of technology-mediated delivery and noting that lecturers and learners had adjusted reasonably well to the online modality of teaching and learning, the administration decided to go with a blended modality to build flexibility into the structure of their offerings.

In the first semester of the new academic year, the College experienced several challenges with blended learning. Learners began complaining and demanded a meeting with the Principal who invited the Academic Director and Quality Assurance Officer to attend, as key members of the academic monitoring team. It became clear to the Principal that the training provided before the start of the semester weighed more heavily towards the use of tools for teaching online than in the direction of the adjustments to be made to methods, materials and resources for blended delivery. She recognised that no standard format was in use for converting courses for blended delivery. In addition:

1. Most courses were being delivered using the course outlines designed for face-to-face delivery.
2. No consideration was given to universal design for learning. Not to mention assessment, about which the learners also complained.

The Principal advised the students that the delivery issues would be addressed urgently. She asked them to return for another meeting where they could elaborate on the assessment issues; they agreed to do so.

**The Quality Assurance (QA) Officer, in the meantime, was tasked with putting together a team to address the issues identified in an effective and expeditious manner.**



## Activity – Addressing Course Quality Issues

Participants will work in groups to complete this case. Each group will analyse the case using the Standards as a guide as well as other resources outlined below. One person will present each group's response, with others joining in as discussants.

1. The Principal has asked you, as the QA Officer, to meet with instructors, members of the ICT Department and other relevant stakeholders, to:
  - Distill the issues related to the delivery of blended courses and programmes at the College, referring closely to the UCJ's Standards for Distance Education.
  - Prepare a detailed report on the issues identified, making sure to include recommendations for addressing them.
2. If you were the Principal, how would you do things differently to ensure compliance with the distance education standards in the future?



## Linking the Case to the Standards

The matrix below shows the quality issues identified in the case and the related standard indicators for each. This will help to guide the discussion.

Case	Criterion	Issue	Standard Indicators
2	Academic Programmes, Curricula and Materials	Programme Alignment	2.1.2
		Programme Learning Outcomes	2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3
		Curriculum Review	2.3.2, 2.3.3
	Academic Programmes, Curricula and Materials	Instructional Package	2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.5.3
		Feedback Mechanism	2.6.1, 2.6.2
		Instructional Templates	2.8.1, 2.8.2, 2.8.3, 2.8.4, 2.8.7
	Learner Engagement, Assessment, Achievement & Satisfaction	Universal Design for Learning	4.1.3

# CASE STUDY 3

## RESET: BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD AT PTTC – PART II



### Overview

As Premier Teacher Training College worked through the challenges raised by its learners, the College tackled the problems related to online assessment. Learners outlined a number of issues which made it clear that a reset in this regard was also in order.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the case analysis, you will be able to:

1. Describe the problem/s the case presents
2. Identify the salient or primary issues of the case
3. Determine an appropriate course of action to resolve the problem/s
4. Develop an action plan/implementation plan with timelines
5. Apply Criterion 4 of the Standards for Distance Education to improve delivery of online courses and programmes

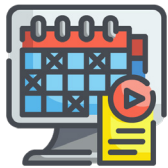
## THE CASE



As the reset at Premier Teacher Training College got underway, learners met once again with the Principal, the Academic Director and the Quality Assurance Officer. They continued their discussion, this time on the challenges with assessment for their blended courses. The learners explained that:

1. Assignments were particularly burdensome to complete as they all fell due at the end of each course.
2. As it was in the days of face-to-face delivery, most courses had one major final task, or one in-course task in addition to the final one.
3. The assessments were pretty much all writing tasks, many of which seemed so unrealistic; the students had assumed that since there were various tools available in the learning management system, assignments would be more varied ... less boring, more relevant.
4. Also, they were still required to submit assignments at the department office although they could be submitted via the learning management system. Assignments had been mislaid in the office and students had to make another trip to the campus to resubmit. Was that really necessary?

**They wanted to know: Could the whole matter of assessment for the virtual learning environment be thoroughly reviewed? Should things be so burdensome?**



### **Activity – Improving Assessment at Premier Teacher Training College**

This task incorporates both individual and group work. Individuals will need to identify their own philosophy of assessment and feedback and discuss this with the group. The major part of the task will be group-based, involving the revision of the assessment policy and role play of its presentation to the College's Board.

As the Quality Assurance Officer, organise and execute the following:

1. Discussion on each participant's feedback and assessment philosophy.

2. Group session/s (face-to-face or online) involving all course facilitators. The focus must be on “Improving Assessment at Premier Teacher Training College: Towards Policy Revision”. Key questions: What is effective assessment? What is effective online assessment? What is authentic assessment?
3. Revision of documentation regarding assessment and feedback policies at Premier Teacher Training College. This will incorporate online assessment, paying close attention to the Standards for Distance Educationn
4. Presentation of the revised documentation to the “Board of Directors” (role play).
5. Incorporation of the comments and recommendations from the “Board” into the revised policy.



## Linking the Case to the Standards

The matrix below shows the quality issues identified in the case and the related standard indicators for each. This will help to guide the discussion.

Case	Criterion	Issue	Standard Indicators
3	Learner Engagement, Assessment, Achievement and Satisfaction	Assessment Policy	4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4
		Assessment Tools and Marking Schemes	4.5.1
		Use of Rubrics and Marking Schemes	4.7.1



# CASE STUDY 4

## MYCLASS IS NOT TOP CLASS



### Overview

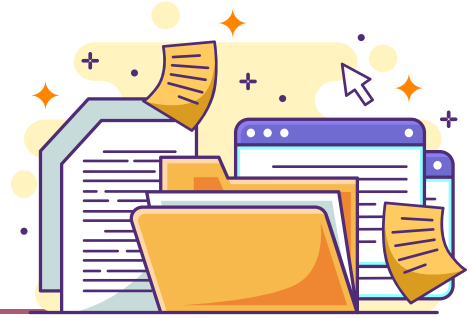
Students at Renaissance University College were frustrated. They found it difficult to use MyClass, the College's learning management system, as they were unfamiliar with the tools in the system. A visually impaired student was among the students who expressed frustration as he was unable to complete the assignments. The students penned a letter to the College's Academic Director.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the case analysis, you will be able to:

1. Describe the problem/s the case presents
2. Identify the salient or primary issues of the case
3. Determine an appropriate course of action to resolve the problem/s
4. Develop an action plan/implementation plan with timelines
5. Apply relevant sections of Criteria 2–4 of the Standards for Distance Education to improve delivery of online courses and programmes

## THE CASE



Crystal was having a very bad day, which followed a very bad night. She thought of herself as proficient with technology, but she really used her Smartphone for communicating with her friends and family, and used her laptop mainly for surfing the Internet and for word processing. So her distress was palpable as she had struggled all night to complete the first assignment of her first year at Renaissance University College. She was required to use a range of tools in the learning management system, MyClass, to work with her peer group and upload the outcome of that activity for grading. As she pondered her next move, she overheard the following discussion among her classmates:

**John-Paul:** “Boy, I’m so frustrated! I spent hours trying to figure out how to use the tools in MyClass and I am nowhere nearer to finishing the assignment. How did it go for you, Chris?”

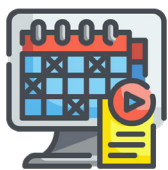
**Chris:** “If I did not have help from Suzie I don’t know how I would have managed!”

**Crystal joined the conversation:** “I did not sleep a wink! I did not know what to do at all! No matter how I tried I just couldn’t figure out how to use the tools. Not even Google could help me with this one!”

**John-Paul:** “I heard some of our other classmates complaining too. This is our first year and our first semester, right? Shouldn’t we have been given some kind of guidance or training on how to use the tools in MyClass? Who can we talk to about this. Troy says he can hardly see anything on the course page in MyClass. He has really poor eyesight and things are worse at night.”

**By then, Suzie had joined the conversation:** “I think we should write a letter to the Academic Director and explain our challenge. We should ask for support.”

**They all agreed to send a letter to the Academic Director.**



### Activity – Orientation to the Learning Management System

Group work is essential for this case, whether face to face or virtual. Each group will analyse the case using the UCJ’s SDE as a guide as well as other resources outlined below. One person will present each group’s response, with others joining in as discussants.

1. The Academic Director and the Quality Assurance Officer are responsible for guiding this activity. As the team responsible for learner support at Renaissance, you are required to investigate the complaints and formulate solutions to the issues raised.



2. Review a checklist such as Online Learning Consortium (OLC) OSCQR's course design scorecard (<https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/consult/oscqr-course-design-review/>). This will show how learning management systems align with established standards, relying on constructivist philosophies.
3. Based on the checklist used and the learners' complaints, identify the "signposts" that are missing from Renaissance's LMS. Signposts help learners to know what to do as they move from task to task and feature to feature on a learning management system.
4. Plan a comprehensive orientation session for learners, incorporating how to use the LMS. This latter aspect of the presentation must "walk" learners through the LMS.
5. Draft a multimedia presentation for learners to accompany the plan, including how to use the tools and resources on the LMS.



## Linking the Case to the Standards

The matrix below shows the quality issues identified in the case and the related standard indicators for each. This will help to guide the discussion.

Case	Criterion	Issue	Standard Indicators
4	Academic Programmes, Curricula and Materials	Use of Technology Resources	2.10.3, 2.10.4
	Learner Services and Support	Communication and Interaction with and among Students	3.3.1, 3.3.3, 3.3.4
	Learner Engagement, Assessment, Achievement & Satisfaction	Policy to Facilitate Special Needs Students	4.13.1, 4.13.2





# CASE STUDY 5

## INSECURITY AT SUPREME COLLEGE



### Overview

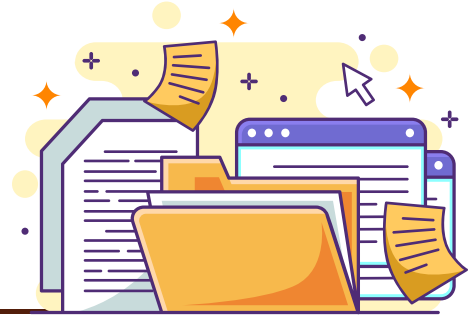
Shortcuts taken at Supreme College landed the College in hot water and led to a long process of recovery. Information and communication systems, which were not being managed by trained ICT professionals, were hacked. The police's cybercrime unit is investigating and asking questions about policies.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the case analysis, you will be able to:

1. Describe the problem/s the case presents
2. Identify the salient or primary issues of the case
3. Determine an appropriate course of action to resolve the problem/s
4. Develop an action plan/implementation plan, with timelines
5. Apply relevant sections of Criteria 3 and 5 of the Standards for Distance Education to improve delivery of online courses and programmes

## THE CASE

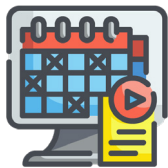


Since Supreme College began offering online courses and programmes two years ago, the IT lecturer had been managing the ICT systems at the College. This was never intended to be a permanent job but he was willing to get things started and he was knowledgeable, so the Principal assigned him the task of getting things up and running. They hired a part-time assistant, a young tech enthusiast in her second year of a degree programme, and both worked well together to keep things going.

It had come to the attention of the newly appointed Quality Assurance Officer that hackers had compromised the communications and learning management system at Supreme College. Now, the police had become involved in the matter as there was concern that students' personal data and other records, as well as records related to their assignments and grades which were stored in the learning management system, could have been compromised.

The police were certainly doing a thorough investigation. The investigating officer from the force's Internet and Cyber Crimes Unit (ICCU) asked for the College's cybersecurity policy. There was none. He asked about the records management policy and maintenance arrangements for the learning management system. No documentation could be produced. A significant gap had been revealed.

**How would the Quality Assurance Officer address this? How could Supreme College recover?**



### Activity – Putting ICT and Internet Security Policies in Place

This case may be carried out in pairs or in larger groups. The aim is to arrive at a comprehensive technology management solution and robust cybersecurity policies.

As the Quality Assurance Officer:

1. Arrange a brief talk from an expert in the field of cybersecurity, or an ICT specialist, for some current context on this dynamic field and the threats for higher education institutions.
2. If (1) is not possible, start with a review of literature on the areas of cybersecurity and technology management. Some resources are included in the list of references.

3. Following the talk and/or the review, participants must examine and discuss what should be in place in the institution/s as documentation and as practice. Use a table to do this.
4. In the table, include a column where the main areas or elements to be addressed are clearly identified.
5. Participants will make recommendations for Supreme College as to how it can recover from this problem. Recommendations must be informed by the Standards for Distance Education.



## Linking the Case to the Standards

The matrix below shows the quality issues identified in the case and the related standard indicators for each. This will help to guide the discussion.

Case	Criterion	Issue	Standard Indicators
5	Learner Services and Support	Records Management	3.5.1, 3.5.2
	Technology Services	Institutional Technology Policy and Plans	5.1.1, 5.1.2
		Cybersecurity Systems and Policy	5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.4



# REFERENCES

- Al-Hamdani, W. A., & Dixie, W. (2009). Information security policy in small education organization Proceedings of the Information Security Curriculum Development Conference.  
<https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/1940976.1940991>.
- Anderson, T., & Elloumi, F., eds. (2004). Theory and Practice of Online Learning. Vancouver: Athabasca University.
- Beukes-Amiss, M., Haynes Brown, T., Moore, Mpine Makoe, S., Skidmore, J., & George Veletsianos, G. (2022). Making digital assessment count: Designing for engagement, integrity and authenticity. COL Knowledge Series.  
<https://oasis.col.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/f4bb5241-cf70-44de-8d3a-95d82b312ed1/content>.
- Boston University Center for Teaching and Learning. n.d. Using Case Studies to Teach.  
<https://www.bu.edu/ctl/teaching-resources/using-case-studies-to-teach/>.
- Chachak, E. (n.d.). Importance of data security in higher education.  
<https://www.cyberdb.co/importance-of-data-security-in-higher-education-institutions/>.
- Commonwealth of Learning, and Asian Development Bank. (1999). Planning and management of open and distance learning training toolkit.  
<https://oasis.col.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/add65b37-2027-44b8-badd-b894db0cb11f/content>.
- Conrad, D., & Openo, J. (2018). Assessment strategies for online learning: Engagement and authenticity <https://www.aupress.ca/books/120279-assessment-strategies-for-online-learning/>.  
<https://doi.org/10.15215/aupress/9781771992329.01>.
- EDUCAUSE. (2023). 2023 EDUCAUSE Horizon Report Teaching and Learning Edition.  
<https://library.educause.edu/resources/2023/5/2023-educause-horizon-report-teaching-and-learning-edition>. (pdf version available.)
- Fouad, N. S. (2021). Securing higher education against cyberthreats: From an institutional risk to a national challenge." Journal of Cyber Policy 6(2), 137-154.  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23738871.2021.1973526>.
- Hodges, C., Moore, S., Lockee, B., Trust T., & Bond, A. (2020). The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning. Educause Review.  
<https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergency-remote-teaching-and-online-learning>.
- Knowles, M. S. (1968). Andragogy, not pedagogy. Adult Leadership, 16(10), 350–352, 386.
- Kop, R. (2011). The Challenges to Connectivist Learning on Open Online Networks: Learning Experiences during a Massive Open Online Course." International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning 12(3), 19–38. <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v12i3.88>.
- Loepp, Eric. (2021). What students want: A simple, navigable LMS course design. Faculty Focus.  
<https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/online-course-design-and-preparation/what-students-want-a-simple-navigable-lms-course-design/>.

- Moore, E. (2013, June 15). 7 Assessment Challenges of Moving Your Course Online (and a Dozen+ Solutions). Faculty Focus. <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/7-assessment-challenges-of-moving-your-course-online-solutions/>.
- Nolan, A. (2023). Engaging the adult learner: An action research study on delivering effective online learning experiences. Instructional Design Capstones Collection. 84. [https://scholarworks.umb.edu/instruction\\_capstone/84](https://scholarworks.umb.edu/instruction_capstone/84).
- Northern Illinois University Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning. (n.d.). Case Studies. <https://www.niu.edu/citl/resources/guides/instructional-guide/case-studies.shtml>.
- Olcott, D., Jr. (2020). In Search of Leadership: Practical Perspectives on Leading Distance Education Organisations. Asian Journal of Distance Education, 15(2). <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1285337.pdf>.
- Park, J., & Vance, A. (2021). Higher education voices: College students' attitudes toward data privacy. Student Privacy Compact. <https://studentprivacycompass.org/resource/higheredvoices2021/>.
- Revak, Marie. (2020). When the tide goes out: Identifying and supporting struggling students in online courses. Faculty Focus. <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/identifying-and-supporting-struggling-students-in-online-courses/>.
- Scarfone, K. (2023). What higher ed institutions should know about security service edge. EdTech magazine. <https://edtechmagazine.com/higher/article/2023/01/what-higher-ed-institutions-should-know-about-security-service-edge>.
- Sabo, C. (2021). Helping students navigate the LMS. Learning Technologies. <https://www.codlearningtech.org/2021/10/19/helping-students-navigate-the-lms/>.
- Siemens, G. (2005). Connectivism: A learning theory for the digital age. International Journal of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning 2(1). <http://www.itdl.org/>.
- Trust, T. (2023). Strategic blended learning in higher education." Faculty Focus. <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/blended-flipped-learning/strategic-blended-learning-in-higher-education/>.
- University of British Columbia. (n.d.). Teaching guide: Using the UBC open case studies. <https://cases.open.ubc.ca/teaching-guide/>.
- USAID. (n.d.). Toolkit for designing a comprehensive distance learning strategy. <https://www.edu-links.org/resources/toolkit-designing-comprehensive-distance-learning-strategy>.

# APPENDIX

## ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

GOAL:									
ACTION DESCRIPTION	PERSON RESPONSIBLE (QA)	TEAM/GROUP RESPONSIBLE	START	END	TASKS	RESOURCES REQUIRED (MATERIALS, FINANCING)	DOCUMENTS TO BE PRODUCED		
Standard/s	Name/Role		MM/DD	MM/DD					
List Standard indicators to be achieved									



**THE  
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL  
OF JAMAICA**

*"Assuring Quality in Higher Education"*



COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

4710 Kingsway, Suite 2500  
Burnaby, British Columbia Canada V5H4M2  
Telephone: +1 604 775 8200 | Fax: +1 604 775 8210  
Email: [info@col.org](mailto:info@col.org)

Web: [www.col.org](http://www.col.org)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/COL4D>  
Twitter: <http://twitter.com/COL4D>  
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/commonwealth-of-learning>  
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/comlearn>