Distance and Online Training and Assessment – Advantages and Challenges

Typical strategies for distance and online delivery

Different media:

- Mail/correspondence, email, telephone, computer based and on-line, cloud technology, social media, conferencing, forums, gamification (virtual and augmented reality)

Different content:

- Text, image, audio, video, simulations, case studies

Different pacing:

- Live, recorded, synchronous, self-paced

Advantages for learners

Flexibility:

- ✓ Accessibility (geographical distance, disability, detention, quarantine, anywhere, anytime, …)
- ✓ Individualisation (pace, content, mode, …)
- ✓ Personal direct contact with trainer/assessor
- ✓ Time management (domestic commitments, work commitments, …)
- ✓ Wider choice of electives
- ✓ Positive guidance
- ✓ Reduced learner costs (no travel, parking, café costs, …)
- ✓ Learner support
- ✓ Clarity of requirements
- ✓ Up-to-date training resources
- ✓ Best industry practices
- ✓ Local resources
- ✓ Learning style preferences

Advantages for RTOs

- ✓ Market reach
- ✓ Range of services and electives
- ✓ Robustness
- ✓ Efficiency
- ✓ Cost
- ✓ Flexible work times for trainers/assessors
- ✓ Monitoring individual progress
- ✓ Scalability

Challenges for learners

- ➢ Access to technology
- ➢ Access to the web and adequate data plans
- ➢ System navigation
- ➢ Service provider dependency
- ➢ Digital literacy (computers, scanners, printers, video, mobile)
- ➢ Set up support
- ➢ Access to system support
- ➢ Isolation and dislocation
- ➢ Peer interaction
- ➢ Text dependency
- ➢ LLN challenges
- ➢ Self-motivation, self-discipline and time management
- ➢ Responsibility for resources
- ➢ Pathways for contacting trainer/assessor
- ➢ Access to learning support
- ➢ Learning style preferences
- ➢ Complaints and appeals
- ➢ Withdrawal and completion

Challenges for RTOs

- ➢ Provision of digital technology
- ➢ Pace of technological change
- ➢ Provision of IT support services learners and staff
- ➢ Expertise of trainers/assessors & professional development
- ➢ Trainer/assessor workload
- ➢ Set-up costs
- ➢ Funding and regulatory requirements
- ➢ Clarity and currency of marketing
- ➢ Monitoring activity (contacts, participation, products, help)
- ➢ Meeting unit requirements
- ➢ Authenticity, fraud and plagiarism
- ➢ Motivation, engagement and monitoring
- ➢ Sequencing of delivery … theory, practical, assessment …
- ➢ Response time for feedback, advice and queries
- ➢ Record-keeping, privacy and security
- ➢ Revision of resources (TAS, DAPs, delivery & assess)
- ➢ Changing delivery agreements and refunds
- ➢ Quality assurance and compliance