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Appendix: Guide to Blended Learning

Introduction
Learning technologies in language education are developing at a fast pace, and an increasing number of Language Education Centres (LECs) are considering introducing, or have already introduced, ‘Blended Learning’, that is to say learning which combines traditional face-to-face tuition in classrooms with other modes of delivery to computers, mobile devices and/or via on-line programs or meetings. The Eaquals Inspection Manual has been revised to take account of such developments and the changes they bring for LECs and their clients and to ensure that Eaquals high standards are maintained in this digital age, and this Appendix to the Manual is intended to provide guidance for inspectors and LECs on Blended Learning.

a) What sort of provision does this Guide cover?
New modes of language instruction use web-based meeting software, moodle\(^1\) platforms, chat rooms, computer programs etc. to offer learning opportunities to language learners, who can be many miles away, and who can often choose to take advantage of the instruction at any time which suits them. Indeed, it is now possible to provide language instruction without physical classrooms or schools, and without ever meeting the learner face-to-face.

Eaquals does not at present accredit providers whose courses are entirely or primarily delivered online. The modifications to the current scheme are intended to apply to new and current Eaquals members who may be adding digital online learning services as a feature of their existing face-to-face classroom-based provision.

b) Observation of Blended Learning
Where any student-enrolled hours for a course are mandatorily to be undertaken as online learning, this will need to be experienced / observed by Inspectors as part of the teaching and learning provision of an LEC. The Eaquals ‘Re-inspection and First Inspection Application Form’ has been revised to include information on any Blended Learning and other online learning services, and will be used to determine the extent of such provision when setting up the (re-)inspection.

If necessary and/or convenient, observation of Blended Learning may take place off-site, for example in an inspector’s own home, at a different time to – but within a week prior to – the scheduled on-site inspection days. Please note this will need to be agreed and arranged between inspectors and the LEC and agreed with Eaquals prior to the inspection, to ensure that the total duration of the inspection does not exceed the days allocated at the time of application. It is, of course, important that LECs provide complete and full information in their application, so that enough total time can be allocated for the inspection of online learning. (Please note also that inspectors who sample online teaching from their own homes will need reliable and robust equipment and connectivity.)

In cases where substantial courses are not available for inspection during the agreed inspection period (for example, Young Learner Courses), follow-up inspections need to be arranged at the appropriate time. Similarly with Blended Learning, if it is not possible to sample a good range and quality of any mandatory online provision and/or there is any course or part of a course which inspectors cannot conveniently observe during the inspection period, then a separate follow-up inspection will need to be arranged. This would not necessarily involve travel, but could be carried

\(^1\) Green text denotes an entry in the Glossary on page 15 of this Guide.
out by an Inspector from home (see previous paragraph).

Please note that Inspectors will need to be provided with log-on details (user-names, passwords etc.) as learners, teachers and managers, together with instructions as provided to all these three groups.

c) How to use this Guide

For learning contexts where Blended Learning constitutes an element of an LEC’s offering, either as a course or part of a course, or as a substantial additional service, this Appendix is intended as a reference supplement to the Eaquals Manual. It should be used in particular with reference to the sections, ‘The Eaquals Standards: Detailed Criteria’ and the ‘Guide to the Eaquals Inspection Process’. The basic principles and standards of the ‘Detailed Criteria’ still apply to Blended Learning, and this Guide suggests how these principles should be interpreted or broadened, with discussion and explanation of some of the technical terms and issues involved. There is a Glossary for reference purposes at the end of this Guide.

The Guide to Blended Learning is organised according to the twelve Categories of the Eaquals accreditation scheme. In two sections of the Manual - ‘The Detailed Criteria for Evaluation of Compliance with the Standards’ and the ‘Guide to the Inspection Process’ -, the symbol ♦ at the end of a number of indicators is used to show that there is relevant guidance in this Appendix for that particular Category, Standard or Indicator. There are guidance notes which are general to a category as well as some that apply to a particular indicator or range of indicators in the ‘Detailed Criteria’ (these will be labelled as such, i.e. a., b., etc. where appropriate). Guidance notes on the inspection process under the heading, ‘Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category’ are also included where relevant. In addition, the symbol ⭐ by the heading ‘Indicators of Excellence beyond the Eaquals Quality Standards’ for some categories shows that there is additional guidance in this Appendix with regard to Points of Excellence for that category.

Finally, the advances in online digital technology are not only to be found in new modes of teaching and learning and their support. Online payment facilities and LECs’ use of social media are increasingly common, and consideration needs to be given to the protection needs of clients, where such developments are in place. To address these and other associated issues, there are a small number of additions and amendments to the Indicators of Compliance, primarily in Category 7, Client Services. The Eaquals Standards remain unchanged.
Inspection Categories

1. Management and Administration

Notes on the Indicators of Compliance in this Category

  g. There is documentary evidence of compliance with international copyright law.

| All third party commercial software is licensed and up to date. |
| There is an appropriate Service Level Agreement with the service provider of the platform |
| There is clear copyright title to materials uploaded onto an online Content Management System, and credits and permissions are cited for non-copyright web material such as free use material e.g. Wikipedia, work on which the copyright has expired, material which is not protected by copyright |

  i. Payment of course fees and other charges are secure, reliable and effective.

| Online payment facilities use accredited web security measures. |

Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category

- Where applicable, inspectors will ask about and seek documentary evidence concerning the above indicators.
- During the course of the inspection, inspectors may also ask managers or other members of staff to demonstrate online management and administration systems to them at their work station.

Indicators of Excellence in this Category

Points of Excellence related to this Section may be discerned using the indicators of excellence suggested in the main Manual.
2. Teaching and Learning

Notes on the Indicators of Compliance in this Category

General Note:
In order to evaluate this Category, where any student-enrolled hours for a course are to be undertaken as synchronous and/or asynchronous online learning, this will need to be observed / experienced by Inspectors on a sampling basis, as with classroom-based teaching and learning. Synchronous learning means that the teacher and student(s) have to be online at the same time, for example with the teacher visible on screen and students interacting via on-screen messaging. Asynchronous learning takes place independently of any teacher or other learners at a time of a student’s choosing. Asynchronous learning may be provided through video lessons, text- and/or audio-based tasks or writing tasks of various kinds, and such materials should be available for inspectors to experience as a learner at their convenience.

Inspectors will need all the usual supporting documents, which enable them to see the learning in context and as part of a properly planned or adaptive course. Eg. lesson plans, schemes of work etc. for synchronous online learning, or learning pathways etc. for asynchronous learning.

a. Coherence between the institution’s stated educational philosophy and pedagogic approach ...

- Sampling of synchronous and asynchronous online lessons shows that lesson content and exploitation of the online medium is consistent with the stated aims and description of the course

b. Teaching quality is high, and clear learning opportunities for all learners are apparent in the classroom.

- Live online teaching makes confident use of the medium to maximise learning opportunities and minimise technical restrictions

c. The content of the lessons, the materials used and the methodology employed are suitable for the age, level and needs of the learners, and appropriate in the context of the course profile.

Adaptive E-learning: if online lesson content is meant to adapt automatically to learner input, then it works to the degree that is promised, for example:
- The system provides suggestions of easier/more difficult/same level activities guided by scores in activities
- The system informs the learner of balance of activities completed in relation to the content of the level

g. Effective class management:
- different working groups
Where learners can interact online with each other and with their tutors (outside of live online teaching), moodle platforms, bulletin boards, chatrooms etc. will be sampled by inspectors.

- aware of learner needs

Online feedback tools are user-friendly and adequately support individual feedback from tutors and other learners (see preceding textbox). For example: assignments submitted for assessment online can be marked and returned online.

- clear instructions

Where online learning is delivered asynchronously without a teacher present, rubrics will need to be exceedingly clear and accessible in language controlled for the appropriate level.
h. Transferable study skills ...learners share responsibility for their own learning.

- There is provision of online learner guidance / learning to learn with the online system
- E-learning programmes provide recommendations for further online study or remedial practice, either automatically, or through tutor.

Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category

- Observation (See also the 'Observation' section in the Introduction):
  - Sample observation of online teaching will take place during the inspection alongside classroom observation, and inspectors should be provided with any passwords etc. that they need in order to be in a position to do this and to monitor any moodle platforms, bulletin boards, chatrooms etc.
  - Arrangements for the observation of online teaching and monitoring of chatrooms etc. should be discussed by the inspector and the LEC prior to the inspection so that appropriate preparation can be made
  - Where the facility of 'adaptive e-learning' is available, inspectors will wish to have this demonstrated or be in a position to experience it themselves
  - Inspectors will want to experience asynchronous learning (where no teacher is present) as learners in order to evaluate online feedback tools, the provision of online learner guidance etc.
  - Observation / experience of asynchronous and synchronous teaching may take place partially or wholly off-site and/or outside the designated inspection days – but within 5 working days prior to the inspection, as long as the extent and organization of this has been pre-agreed with Eaquals and the inspector(s).

- Where online teachers and/or learners are not able to be physically present during the inspection, it may be necessary for an additional teacher and/or focus group meeting to take place online, and the arrangements for this should be discussed between the inspector and the LEC prior to the inspection

- In student focus group meetings inspectors may ask about their experience of learning online, and in teacher focus group meetings, teachers may be asked about their experience of teaching online

Notes on Indicators of Excellence in this Category

- Live online teaching makes creative and innovative use of the medium to offer an outstanding on-line learning experience

- Asynchronous programmes of learning are clearly adaptive to the individual learner, providing some or all of the following:
  - suggestions of easier/more difficult/same level activities guided by scores in activities
  - personalised suggestions of activities that may interest the learner (e.g. through site usage tracking, as used by Google and e-shopping sites)
  - accessible visual summaries that inform the learner of balance of activities completed in relation to the content of the level
  - suggestions of practice exercises related to (persistent) language mistakes
  - recommendations for further online study or remedial practice, either automatically, or through the tutor.

- Online communication between students and tutors, through bulletin boards, forums or other social media tools is exceptionally user-friendly and makes a significant contribution to the learning experience.
3. Course Design and Supporting Systems

Notes on the Indicators of Compliance in this Category

b. There are written descriptions of the institution’s learning programmes:
   - learner-defined programmes

   There are clear goals for online services designed to achieve learning stated learning outcomes. There is also clarity of learning pathways, menus or hyperlinks related to learning outcomes and, where appropriate, to a needs analysis, supporting learner decisions as to what to do next. For example, lists of activities in sequence, organised by linguistic / communicative focus, or suggestions for further practice to recycle or extend learning with relevant pages should be easy to identify.

d. There are teacher support systems in place including ... clear orientation and induction procedures ...

   There are induction procedures in place to ensure staff can exploit available online tools sufficiently well to consistently deliver programme promises. These measures may include live training (face to face or WebEx), video guides, mentoring and/or self-evaluation.

e. There is an appropriately qualified Director of Studies ...

   A member of the academic management team has considerable experience and demonstrable competence in the learning technologies in use for product delivery.

Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category

- In meetings with the academic management team inspectors will check that there are clear goals for online services and will ask to see evidence that online learning courses are related to stated learning outcomes and/or a learner-specific needs analysis (see b. above)
- Inspectors will evaluate and discuss available online induction tools and procedures for staff, and will either experience the available induction themselves as teachers or academic managers will demonstrate these to the inspectors.
- Inspectors should be provided with any password they need to access the online resources as a teacher (See Introduction).
- Inspectors will look for evidence that the DoS or other academic manager has appropriate experience and competence in the learning technologies in use for product delivery
- In teacher focus group meetings, inspectors may ask teachers about:
  - how learning outcomes are determined and delivered
  - their experience of induction with regard to the various learning technologies in use
- In student focus group meetings inspectors may ask about their learning goals, whether there are clear learning pathways to help them achieve those goals etc.

Notes on Indicators of Excellence in this Category

- The integration of online course components with face-to-face course components makes excellent use of the interaction between the two, providing clear mutual enhancement.
- Induction procedures for training staff in the use of online tools are exceptionally well-designed, encouraging creative development of the tools by staff themselves when appropriate
4. Assessment and Certification

Notes on the Indicators of Compliance in this Category

General Note: Where assessment takes place without the teacher present, as in e.g. online testing, extra care will need to be taken to ensure that all instructions and rubrics are clear, precise and comprehensible.

Please note that Eaquals cannot accredit an LEC where assessment linked to an LEC’s certification of level occurs without supervision online and/or off-site, as it is impossible to guarantee that no fraud takes place in such circumstances.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>g.</th>
<th>Formal assessment procedures ... are reliable ...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reporting mechanisms are in place to identify any problems or inconsistencies with the automatic marking of test items, and to inform ongoing calibration of test results.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i.</th>
<th>Where assessment is linked to a qualification to progress to a second course of study ...</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online testing tools leading / contributing to certification of achievement and / or proficiency have appropriate security measures to prevent fraud. For example, timed once-only test access and password protection. See also important General Note above.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>j.</th>
<th>Learners are given reports and/or certificates at the end of their course/length of stay ...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Measures (such as protected PDF documents) are in place to ensure electronic certificates cannot be edited by recipients.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category

- In meetings with the academic management inspectors will ask about any reporting mechanisms that identify any problems or inconsistencies with automatically marked tests
- Inspectors will also ask about security measures to prevent fraud, and will check that electronic certificates cannot be edited by recipients

Notes on Indicators of Excellence in this Category

- Aggregate results of online tests are statistically analysed to:
  - identify trends in the student population
  - ensure the reliability of calibration of tests/test items to the CEFR common scale and / or external examination benchmarks.
- Suggestions for supplementary study material appropriate to their needs is offered to students as part of the progression process of the online testing system: these suggestions are tailored to the test results obtained by the student.
5. Academic Resources

Notes on the Indicators of Compliance in this Category

b. Copyright

There is a clear policy and procedure for respecting and verifying copyright for online content including
- clear copyright title to materials uploaded onto an online Content Management System
- credits and permission cited for non-copyright material
(See also Management and Administration, Category 1, g.).

d. The quality - of both appearance and content - of in-house material is monitored...

Online content is accessible for teachers and students and organised / classified in such a way that they can:
- find things quickly and easily according to focus and level of challenge
- recognize the function played by each type of material
- allocate or recommend relevant material to learners accordingly.

e. All equipment and academic resources are properly maintained, and connectivity (of electricity, telephone, the internet etc.) is consistently reliable, particularly where delivery of all or part of the course is reliant on such connections.

- There is a regular, effective monitoring and maintenance procedure of external links, especially if these are fundamental to a system.
- Online functions operate reliably according to course objectives, and on all devices / operating systems the learner might be expected to use.

Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category

- Inspectors will look for evidence of copyright for any online content in use, including credits and permissions cited for non-copyright material.
- In their inspection of online content, inspectors will check that teaching and learning resources are accessible and organized in such a way that they are easy to find and use for both teachers and students. Inspectors may also ask about this issue in teacher and student focus group meetings
- In their meetings with management and academic management inspectors will check procedures for the monitoring the maintenance of external links, and of the monitoring of the reliability of online functions generally

Notes on Indicators of Excellence in this Category

- Resources encourage student independence and involvement by catering flexibly to personal interests, through ease of navigation, range of content, shared recommendations and exploitation of learner input - for example through guided use of wikis and other collaborative tools.
- Online learning resources provide a highly motivational range of task types and exploitation of authentic or adapted third party media.”
6. Learning Environment

Notes on the Indicators of Compliance in this Category

General Note:
These notes cover learning environments offered by an e-learning platform, website or other on-line environment.

Compliance indicators n. and o. in the manual are particularly relevant to E-learning providers.

g. **Boards and notice boards** in teaching spaces are visible to all learners, in good condition and big enough for the room.

h. There is large enough **communal space for staff**, and waiting space (or where relevant, recreational space) for learners and/or parents.

o. There is some provision for reasonable adjustment(s) available for learners with special learning needs or disabilities, or plans to provide this.

Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category

- Inspectors will check in meetings with academic management and look for confirmation in documents that:
  - there are procedures for the regular monitoring of online bulletin boards and similar communication channels, including peer to peer
  - there is clarity over what social media are supported and how, if at all, there is integration with the online learner management system

- Inspectors will ask about and check whether and how any reasonable adjustments are available to facilitate online accessibility to all platforms for learners with an impairment of any kind (e.g. impaired motor skills, impaired vision including colour blindness, impaired hearing etc.)

Notes on Indicators of Excellence in this Category

- The learning platform is exceptionally user-friendly and simple to navigate, contributing to an outstanding learning experience.
- Exceptional measures have been taken to ensure accessibility and relevance to students with special learning needs or disabilities.
- Informational systems / user guides supporting the user are highly accessible, focused and responsive to the context of use.
7. Client Services

Notes on the Indicators of Compliance in this Category

a. There are efficient ways of dealing with learners’ queries, and offering them guidance and support.

User guides with full log-in instructions to online tools and resources are provided with any passwords and other access details given to participants and staff.

There is a defined technical support process that is clear and accessible to all users, and which logs support requests systematically.

e. There are written procedures for staff concerning the handling of serious learner welfare issues such as bullying, harassment ...

- There is monitoring of any peer to peer learner forums and social networking sites to ensure against communication that is bullying, offensive or inappropriate in a way that may distress or endanger staff or students. There is a defined reporting process for staff and students to report any abuse.

f. There is suitable supervision of young learners (appropriate to the site, and the age range of the children) while on the institution’s premises, before and after lessons and during leisure and social activities.

There are appropriate child protection measures in place for safe browsing - such as filtering firewalls (content blocking). These are described in an institutional Information Security Policy.

Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category

- Inspectors will check that there are user guides to online tools and resources for participants and staff, and may ask about this in teacher and student focus group meetings
- In meetings and documentation inspectors will look for evidence that there is a clearly defined and efficient technical support process
- Inspectors will check monitoring systems of any peer to peer learner forums and social networking sites that ensure that there is no inappropriate or offensive communication taking place towards staff or students
- Inspectors will check that there are appropriate child protection measures in place for safe internet browsing

Notes on Indicators of Excellence in this Category

Points of Excellence related to this Section may be discerned using the indicators of excellence suggested in the main Manual.
8. Quality Assurance

Notes on the Indicators of Compliance for this Category

a. There are systems to foster a culture of quality throughout the institution ...

- There are procedures for, reviewing and updating online services at defined, regular intervals, such as calendared meetings and development projects.
- Regular consultation and staff/learner feedback includes a specific focus on online services and the online learner experience.

c. There is regular lesson observation ... by an academic manager

Observation / evaluation of online tutoring by the DoS or other Academic Manager includes a sampling of both synchronous and asynchronous teacher / student interaction.

Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category

- Inspectors will look for evidence:
  o of procedures for reviewing and updating online services at defined regular intervals
  o that regular consultation and staff/learner feedback includes a specific focus on online services and the online learner experience
- In meetings with academic management and with teachers, and in examination of documentation, inspectors will look for evidence of regular observation of online teaching (synchronous and asynchronous) in the same way that they check for such records of observed classroom teaching, for example in Continual Professional Development records

Notes on Indicators of Excellence in this Category

Points of Excellence related to this Section may be discerned using the indicators of excellence suggested in the main Manual.
9. Staff Profile and Development

General Note

Indicators of Compliance, Procedures etc. and Points of Excellence related to this Section may be discerned using the guidance in Category 9 of the main Manual.

10. Staff Employment Terms

Notes on indicators of compliance in this category

e. There are clear terms and conditions of employment ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comprehensive information is available to staff about terms and conditions of online tuition and e-learning, including:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Fee structure for online services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Arrangements for the security of any payments made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Terms &amp; conditions of fair usage, including conditions and arrangements for reimbursement in case of system failure.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category

- Inspectors check documentation containing information for staff about terms and conditions as in e. above
- Inspectors may also ask about information available on terms and conditions for online teaching in teacher focus group meetings

Notes on Indicators of Excellence in this Category

Points of Excellence related to this Section may be discerned using the indicators of excellence suggested in the main Manual.

11. Internal Communications

Notes on the indicators of compliance in this category

General Note:

In situations where staff are rarely or infrequently in face-to-face contact with managers and/or with peers, compliance with the indicators in this category should be achieved by means of telephonic and online digital communication such as e-mail, online meetings (e.g. Skype, WebEx), bulletin boards etc.

Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category

Procedures, meetings and documentation related to this Section will be similar to those set out in the main Manual, with the additional possibility of telephonic and digital communication where necessary as stated above in the General Note.

Notes on Indicators of Excellence in this Category

Points of Excellence related to this Section may be discerned using the indicators of excellence suggested in the main Manual.
12. External Communications

Notes on the indicators of compliance in this category

a. All promotional materials (both printed and electronic) must provide information, which is comprehensible, complete etc. For E-learning this may include any or all of the following as appropriate:

- The interface language to be used for instruction
- The structure of e-learning site components and their relationships to each other
- The duration of the course, number of units / lessons or any other information / guidance on the amount of time the learner will need to complete the course or any part of the course, including any constraints on the amount of time allowed for completion
- Is the course suitable/unsuitable for specific groups, for example: younger learners
- Information concerning any differentiation of mandatory and /or optional features
- The media to be used and essential equipment / connectivity requirements needed to take part in the course
- The amount of access learners will have to live tutors (if relevant), and what the channels for such contact will be e.g. face-to-face meeting, skype meeting etc.
- Information concerning any end-of-course testing procedures and / or certification.

b. Contractual information is provided in a way that is clear and comprehensible For E-learning this might include any or all of the following information:

- Fee structure for online services
- Terms & conditions of fair usage, including conditions and arrangements for reimbursement in case of system failure

There is clear information to the student about on-line tutors including
- Availability of an on-line tutor
- amount of access
- means of access
- arrangements for contact

Notes on Procedures, Meetings and Documentation in this Category

- Inspectors will check all procedures and publicity material, including web-sites, and contractual documents with regard to compliance with a. and b. above as relevant

Notes on Indicators of Excellence in this Category

Points of Excellence related to this Section may be discerned using the indicators of excellence suggested in the main Manual.
Glossary

Accredited web security measures (Category 1) The use of SSL certificates and/or payment security services such as: “The Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) [which] is a proprietary information security standard for organizations that handle branded credit cards from the major card schemes including Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover” [Wikipedia 19/08/2015]. Other examples of secure payment services include PayPal, Capita etc. For those who require more technical detail in this area, the following site provides useful information: https://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ff648647.aspx (ch.16 of this link recommended)

Accessibility (Category 7) “Web accessibility refers to the inclusive practice of removing barriers that prevent interaction with, or access to websites, by people with disabilities. When sites are correctly designed, developed and edited, all users have equal access to information and functionality.” [Wikipedia 19/08/2015]

Asynchronous learning (Category 2) opposite of ‘Synchronous Learning’: “Instructors provide materials, lectures, tests, and assignments that can be accessed at any time. Students may be given a timeframe … during which they need to connect at least once or twice. But overall, students are free to contribute whenever they choose.” [From http://www.elearners.com/online-education-resources] See also Synchronous Learning

Bulletin Board System (BBS) (Category 2 & 6) “A bulletin board system (BBS) is a computer or an application dedicated to the sharing or exchange of messages or other files on a network.” [WhatIs.com]

Chatroom (Introduction & Category 2) “The term chat room, or chatroom, is primarily used to describe any form of synchronous conferencing, occasionally even asynchronous conferencing. The term can thus mean any technology ranging from real-time online chat and online interaction with strangers (e.g., online forums) to fully immersive graphical social environments. The primary use of a chat room is to share information via text with a group of other users. Generally speaking, the ability to converse with multiple people in the same conversation differentiates chat rooms from instant messaging programs, which are more typically designed for one-to-one communication. The users in a particular chat room are generally connected via a shared interest or other similar connection, and chat rooms exist catering for a wide range of subjects. New technology has enabled the use of file sharing and webcams to be included in some programs. This can be considered a chat room.” [Wikipedia]

Content Management System (Category 1 & 5) abbreviated as CMS, a content management system, also called a Web management system, is software or a group or suite of applications and tools that enable an organisation to seamlessly create, edit, review and publish electronic text; [Adapted from Webopedia 29/07/2015] See also Platform, Service Level Agreement.

Filtering Firewalls / Content blocking The use of safe browsing and / or managed security software such as ‘OpenDNS’ or ‘Trustwave’
Hyperlink (Category 3) “... a word, phrase, or image that you can click on to jump to a new document or a new section within the current document” [techterms.com]

Intranet (Introduction) Digital network like a private internet which is owned by a particular organisation, with access restricted to those users allowed by the organisation

Moodle (Introduction & Category 2) “... a free and open-source software learning management system. ... Moodle is used for blended learning, distance education, flipped classroom and other e-learning projects in schools, universities, workplaces and other sectors. With customisable management features, it is used to create private websites with online courses for educators and trainers to achieve learning goals. ... The stated philosophy of Moodle includes a constructivist and social constructionist approach to education, emphasising that learners (and not just teachers) can contribute to the educational experience. Using these pedagogical principles, Moodle provides an environment for learning communities” [Wikipedia]

Platform (Category 1) sometimes referred to as PaaS (Platform as a Service), a category of cloud computing services that provides a platform allowing customers to develop, run and manage Web applications without the complexity of building and maintaining the infrastructure typically associated with developing and launching a computer application (app); [Adapted from Wikipedia, 29/07/2015] See also Service Level Agreement, Content Management System

Service Level Agreement (Category 1) that part of a contract between two parties (the service provider and the service user) which defines the level of service to be provided; in this context the provider could be a publisher’s internet site from which teaching / learning materials can be downloaded or streamed, and the service level could be a commitment to reliability of connectivity / maintenance of the site / streaming quality etc.; [Adapted from Wikipedia, 29/07/2015]. See also Platform, Content Management System

Synchronous Learning (Category 2) “Synchronous online classes are those that require students and instructors to be online at the same time. Lectures, discussions, and presentations occur at a specific hour. All students must be online at that specific hour in order to participate.” [From http://www.elearners.com/online-education-resources] See also Asynchronous Learning

Wiki (Category 5) “A wiki is a web site that lets any visitor become a participant: you can create or edit the actual site contents without any special technical knowledge or tools. All you need is a computer with an Internet connection. A wiki is continuously “under revision.” It is a living collaboration whose purpose is the sharing of the creative process and product by many. One famous example is Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia with no “authors” but millions of contributors and editors. The word “wiki” comes from Hawaiian language, meaning ‘quick’ or ‘fast’ ” [From http://www.teachersfirst.com/content/wiki/ ] For helpful further information and tutorial see also: http://wikieducator.org/images/3/34/Newbie_Tut1.pdf