

Checklist for developing Indigenous e-Learning resources

(R018GC)

Access and Equity in Online Learning
Version 2, December 2004

Background

The original R018GC checklist was based on the work undertaken by Brett Westblade (University of Melbourne), an adviser to the Kangan Batman TAFE's Horticulture Toolbox augmentation project. In 2004 it was revised by Esme Bamblett (Neenann) and Anne Walsh (Fraynework - Developers of the Native Tittle and Deadly Jam Music Festival Toolboxes) as part of the Australian Flexible Learning Framework's Resources Management project.

This checklist reflects their experience preparing a range of online materials for Indigenous students.

Links to other resources developed by the Australian Flexible Learning Framework have also been added at the end of this checklist.

It is important that the developers of Indigenous online learning resources acknowledge that Indigenous Australians are part of diverse nations. There are approximately 90 surviving languages and 20 of these with distinct associated cultures. Because of this diversity, any resources that are developed for Indigenous users should be developed in partnership with local Indigenous communities to ensure that the resources have been tailored for the specific community in which they are based as well as being able to be used by Indigenous communities in other areas. Cyberspace itself has a culture and is not a neutral or value-free platform for exchange.

1. Cultural Protocols

The first step in developing resources for Indigenous learners is establishing meaningful relationships with learners and their communities. It is important that the environment in which the resource is being used is considered in the development of resources.

- Have the traditional owners of the country in which the resource has been developed been acknowledged in the resource?
- Have cultural protocols been adhered to?
- Have any ethical concerns with the resource been dealt with?
- Have any cross cultural tensions been dealt with?
- Have any copyright concerns been dealt with?
- Have all Indigenous artists/designers/contributors been recognised in the resource?

2. Indigenous Partnerships

It is important that any online Indigenous resource is developed in partnership with the Indigenous community it is intended for. This follows cultural protocols within the Indigenous community and is important for community ownership of the finished product.

- Is community ownership indicated in the resource?
- Has the resource been developed in partnership with relevant Indigenous organisations / community?
- Have the developers of the resource been specific about the purpose of resource, why it is being developed and for whom it is being developed (which Indigenous Community)?
- Does the resource recognize the diversity of Indigenous communities?
- Does the resource recognize the similarities of Indigenous communities?
- Is there room for ongoing collaboration between the community and designers?

3. Technology

Indigenous students like to use games. In order to introduce a new technology it is a good idea to use games so that the students can learn the new technology in a non-threatening way. It is also likely that the students will have a diverse range of skill levels, so the resource should be developed to allow success with a range of skill levels. Special consideration should be given to Indigenous students who use English as a second language.

- Are instructions clear and written in a simple language?
- Have games been used to introduce IT skills required?
- Have email addresses for Indigenous organisations been provided to ensure relevance to participants?
- Have Indigenous bulletin boards / chat rooms / forums been established?
- Does the resource make use of existing Indigenous forums / chat rooms / bulletin boards?
- Have Indigenous images, people, artwork been used in the resource?
- Does the resource indicate an awareness of users skill level?
- Have interactive resources/hands on activities been used?
- Does the design of the resource consider the environment in which it will be used?
- Does the design allow time for students to respond appropriately?

4. Cultural inclusively

The resource should be culturally inclusive in design and content to ensure that Indigenous students will see the relevance of the resource and will be more inclined to utilize it because learning occurs in a cultural context.

- Has local Indigenous content been used in the resource?
- Is the content Indigenous?
- Is the material/content culturally inclusive?
- Is the material/content culturally relevant?
- Does the resource indicate an awareness of Indigenous protocols such as names of deceased etc...?
- Does the resource include Aboriginal ideology?
- Does the resource showcase Indigenous Best Practice models?
- Are Indigenous facts used?
- Are Indigenous examples used?
- Are a variety of Indigenous voices – male, female, and different ages used?
- Are Indigenous music/songs to compliment resource used?
- Does the information require knowledge of an existing agenda?
- Is the diversity of Aboriginal people represented in the resource?
- Are sources of information and images acknowledged / referenced?
- Has written consent been given by the Indigenous communities involved to distribute / share the resource widely?
- Is the interface easy to use and consistent?
- Is the resource easy to customise to reflect the community, its language and images in which it will be used?
- Can different visuals, Indigenous role models and subtle design be used to promote ethnicity from region, suburbs and gender?
- Can images used be deleted if the person is deceased?

5. Delivery

Indigenous students like to build relationships with teachers. It is important that the delivery of any online resources take this into account and allow time and space for this to occur.

- Does the content recognise the importance of relationships?
- Has time been allowed for learners and teachers to build relationships?
- Is community support indicated in the resource?
- Is respect for Elders highlighted? Elders have priority and respect shown through titles such as Aunt / Uncle or Old man with the importance of age being highlighted.
- Is the importance of family highlighted?
- Is the community cohesiveness highlighted?
- Can participants of varying skill levels achieve success by incorporating various levels of learning into the resource?
- Is there sufficient scaffolding built into resource?
- Is the resource responsive to the learners needs? Have students that the resource is designed for been involved in the design and testing of the resource?
- Does the resource utilise group / community activities?
- Does the resource allow for developmental growth in the students?
- Are assessment tasks culturally appropriate?
- Does a tutorial exist to introduce keyboard and mouse skills to students?
- Does the resource provide the Instructor's name, skin name and where they are from?
- Has the resource been set up so that learning is by observation, imitation, and trial and error?
- Can the understanding developed in one situation be applied to another?
- Does the resource use simple text and sensible font sizes?
- Is the language clear, simple and in the student's language? Is any jargon used defined in a separate message box?
- Is the resource interactive? Does feedback exist to correct errors?
- Has simulation been used to support learning?
- Is it a 'Just in Time' resource? Is the information divided into small chunks of learning and not overwhelming?
- Does the resource give the students an opportunity to learn at a time that suits them? Can learners think about a response and then have a go?
- Does the resource use humour to reduce anxiety? Is social networking communication used?
- Has the resource avoided areas of possible insult such as reference to alcohol on the assumption that everyone drinks?
- Is the resource reviewed to improve the effectiveness of content and activities?

Useful Resources

Adapting Online Resources for Indigenous Learners

This report describes the experience of teams who adapted two Horticulture Toolboxes for Indigenous learner as part of the Equity Toolbox initiative 2001-2. It addresses a range of issues of interest to VET practitioners (including learning design for Indigenous ownership, consultation protocols, and cultural sensitivities concerning acknowledgment and permission).

<http://flexiblelearning.net.au/toolbox/document/indighortreport.doc>

Horticulture for Indigenous Learners (Certificate II)

This product is a revision of an earlier Horticulture Toolbox (Series 3) for indigenous learners. It has been revised to make it more appealing to indigenous students. Amendments have been made in consultation with indigenous learners. These include: altering significant images to indigenous people; colours and other images have been changed to give it an indigenous look and feel; more audio has been introduced including indigenous characters to introduce the activities.

<http://flexiblelearning.net.au/toolbox/series4/422.htm>

Learning about Native Title

'Learning about Native Title' is an online training resource focused on the native title claimant application process. It is designed for indigenous learners and employees of local government, native title representative bodies, or other government and non-government agencies involved in native title matters. The product provides a reference resource for a range of competencies in the Local Government Training Package and the Rural Land Management Training Package.

The product follows the experience of the Yarralang community (a fictitious Australian Indigenous community) as they work through the processes involved in preparing, lodging and finalising an application for recognition of the Yarralang community's native title rights and interests. Users can select a role play as a member of the claimant community, as a research or project officer working for a native title representative body or as an officer at a local Council with responsibility for Council's land and water property assets.

<http://flexiblelearning.net.au/toolbox/series4/423.htm>

Deadly Jam Music Festival

This Toolbox is designed for Indigenous learners and will cover competencies relevant to Certificate levels II, III and IV in Music. Learners will follow the experiences of four characters representing potential careers in the music industry. Along the way they will meet well known Indigenous figures in the Australian music scene.

<http://flexiblelearning.net.au/toolbox/series5/516.htm>

Building and Construction

This Toolbox covers four competencies from the Building and Construction Training Package.

The Toolbox covers widely used trade skills and includes templates so that Indigenous communities can use their local images and examples.

<http://flexiblelearning.net.au/toolbox/series5/517.htm>

Cultural Resource Management

This product supports competencies from the Conservation and Land Management Training Package in the areas of Cultural Resource Management. The Toolbox uses simulated Indigenous cultural heritage sites and tasks to allow Indigenous learners to expand on the hands-on learning in this area.

<http://flexiblelearning.net.au/toolbox/series5/518.htm>

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This resource can be downloaded from:

<http://flexiblelearning.net.au/accessequity/downloads/R018GC.pdf>

