Trusting Technology:
Strategies for Assessing Quality, Reliability & Integrity in Online Teaching and Learning

INQAAHE 2019 – Colombo, Sri Lanka, March 25-28

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Senior Academic Director

Member Services & Partnerships

Quality Matters, U.S.A.

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HIGHER EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY LANDSCAPE 2017

A STUDENT LIFECYCLE AND CATEGORIZATION OF TECHNOLOGY PROVIDERS

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2018 HIGHER EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY LANDSCAPE

A CATEGORIZATION OF TECHNOLOGY PROVIDERS

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Updated September 2018

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Workshop Structure & Outline

- ✓ **Brief Introduction of Quality Matters**
- ✓ Quality of Online Education: At ***Institution*** Level
  - ✓ Guidelines & perspectives from US-based accrediting bodies
- ✓ Quality of Online Education: At ***Program*** Level
  - ✓ Program design, teaching & learning support, student outcomes
- ✓ Quality of Online Education: At ***Course*** Level
  - ✓ Alignment of course components to support student success

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QM = Quality Assurance

Quality Matters: non-profit, US-based international organization; leader in quality assurance for online education & e-learning

✓ *Started in 2003 with US DoE funding*

✓ Over 1170+ member institutions world-wide

✓ Faculty-centered to support teaching & learning

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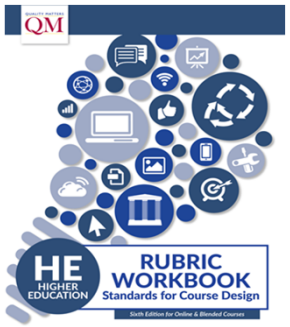
Quality Matters Process



Research-Supported Rubrics & Standards

Professional Development Offerings & Pathways

Peer Review Process for Courses and Programs

Guidance towards Continuum of Excellence

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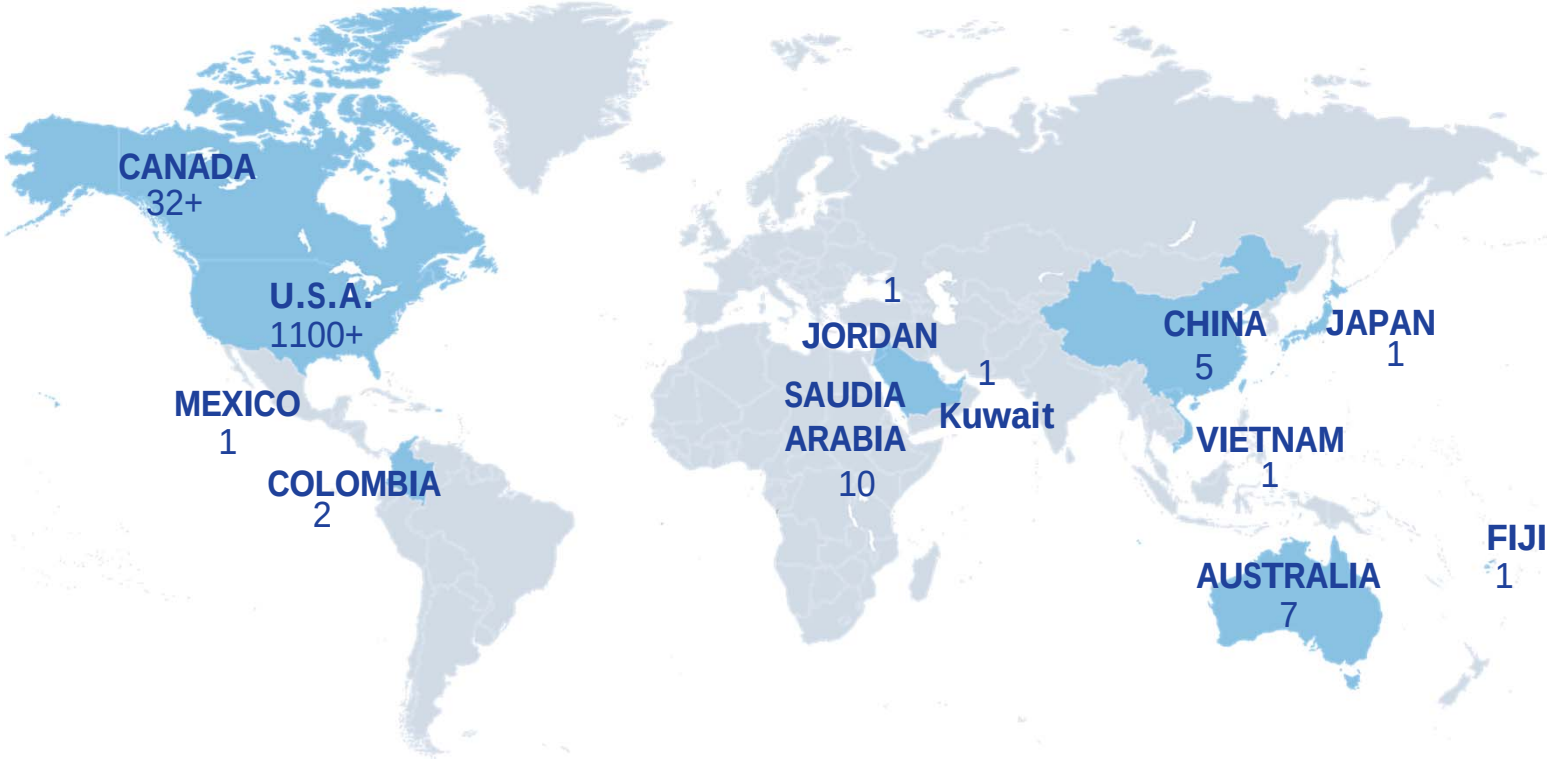
1,170+ QM Member Institutions



Helping you deliver on your online promise

qualitymatters.org

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US-Based QM Member Institutions

- American University
- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- George Washington University
- Georgetown University
- John Hopkins University
- Northwestern University
- Pennsylvania State University
- Purdue University
- Texas A&M University
- University of Arizona
- University of California
- University of Florida
- University of Illinois

[Out of 1100+ US-based member institutions and organizations]

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QM Communities outside USA

- ✓ 11 countries outside USA (60+ intnl members)
  - ✓ 32 institutions in Canada
  - ✓ 10 institutions in Saudi Arabia
  - ✓ 7 institutions in Australia
  - ✓ 5 institutions in China
  - ✓ … in Colombia, Fiji, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Mexico, and Vietnam

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QM International Communities

Interest & desire to represent Quality Matters

Need to establish partnership within local communities

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Quality at Institution Level

Interregional Guidelines [C-RAC 2011]

for the Evaluation of Distance Education

Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions

- ✓ A collective of seven regional organizations responsible for the accreditation of roughly 3,000 of the nation's colleges and universities in USA.

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Interregional Guidelines [C-RAC 2011]

1. Online learning is appropriate to the institution's mission and purposes.
2. The institution's plans for developing, sustaining, and, if appropriate, expanding online learning offerings are integrated into its regular planning and evaluation processes.
3. Online learning is incorporated into the institution's systems of governance and academic oversight.
4. Curricula for the institution's online learning offerings are coherent, cohesive, and comparable in academic rigor to programs offered in traditional instructional formats.

Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions

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Interregional Guidelines [C-RAC 2011]

5. The institution evaluates the effectiveness of its online learning offerings, including the extent to which the online learning goals are achieved, and uses the results of its evaluations to enhance the attainment of the goals.
6. Faculty responsible for delivering the online learning curricula and evaluating the students' success in achieving the online learning goals are appropriately qualified and effectively supported.
7. The institution provides effective student and academic services to support students enrolled in online learning offerings.
8. The institution provides sufficient resources to support and, if appropriate, expand its online learning offerings.
9. The institution assures the integrity of its online offerings.

Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions

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Interregional Guidelines [C-RAC 2011]

- ✓ **Workshop Activity 1:**

  Group discussion on two or three C-RAC Guidelines:

  What evidence is the most challenging to collect and/or analyze? Why?

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Workshop Structure & Outline

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Quality at Program Level

QM Program Reviews & Certifications

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QM Program Certifications

Online Program Design – Criteria:

1. Each program put forward includes measurable learning objectives, outcomes, or competencies. All included programs (i.e., those submitted as examples and those that are not) are expected to reflect the QM Online Program Design criteria or be on a path to doing so.
2. The learning objectives, outcomes, or competencies of the individual courses are consistent with the program objectives, outcomes, or competencies.
3. Courses in the program have been developed by instructional design teams, at least some of whose members have completed professional development in best practices in online course design, or by faculty who have had this professional development.
4. All online courses in the program or programs seeking certification are aligned with the relevant Quality Matters Rubrics.

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QM Program Certifications

Online Teaching Support – Criteria:

1. At least 85% of all online instructors, including part-time faculty, have received professional development in online teaching prior to their online teaching assignment are prepared to be effective and responsive online instructors.
2. The institution or program has provisions for ongoing pedagogical support or mentoring of faculty, including part - time and adjunct faculty new to online teaching.
3. The program encourages ongoing professional development for instructors engaged in online course delivery and provides internal professional development activities and/or financial resources to seek appropriate opportunities for this purpose, externally.
4. The program has a robust process to collect, distribute, and use learner feedback to inform teaching practices.
5. The institution or program has issued recommendations, guidelines, or formal policies, on instructor response time and availability appropriate to support and engage online learners.

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QM Program Certifications

Online Learner Support – Criteria:

1. Direct and indirect support for online learners should include remote access to the following services:

   □ Orientation to online study □ Technical support
   □ Academic advising □ Proctoring and student authentication
   □ Tutoring □ Grade appeals □ Remote library access
   □ Accessibility services □ Records and registration
   □ Financial Aid services □ Billing
   □ Institutional and student policies

2. A robust process to collect, distribute, and use learner feedback to inform and improve learner support efforts.

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QM Program Certifications

Online Learner Success – Criteria:

1. The organization must present a definition of learner success consistent with its philosophy, history, mission, and goals, and mindful of its resources and the characteristics of its learner population.

2. Identify 3-5 measures based on hard data and/or surveys that demonstrate the extent to which learners are succeeding according to the adopted definition of learner success.
   [Examples: retention, completion, graduation, capstone assessments, summative assessments, student outcomes, alumni survey, and employment data]

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QM Program Certification

- ✓ **Workshop Activity 2:**

  Group discussion on one QM Program Certification:

  What evidence is the most challenging to collect and/or analyze? Why?

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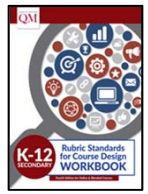
Quality at Course Level

QM Rubric Standards for Course Design

- ✓ Higher Education Rubric
- ✓ Higher Education Publisher Rubric
- ✓ K-12 Secondary Education Rubric
- ✓ K-12 Secondary Ed Publisher Rubric
- ✓ Continuing & Professional Ed Rubric



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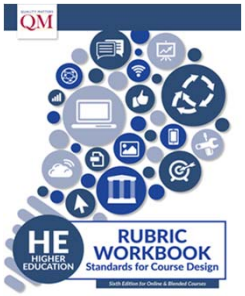
QM Higher Education Rubric

General Standards

1. Course Overview & Introduction
2. Learning Objectives
3. Assessment & Measurement
4. Instructional Materials
5. Learning Activities & Learner Interaction
6. Course Technology
7. Learner Support
8. Accessibility & Usability



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QM Higher Education Rubric

Submitted by James Fowlkes and Brenda Boyd

Alignment Principle lays the foundation to build a solid course.

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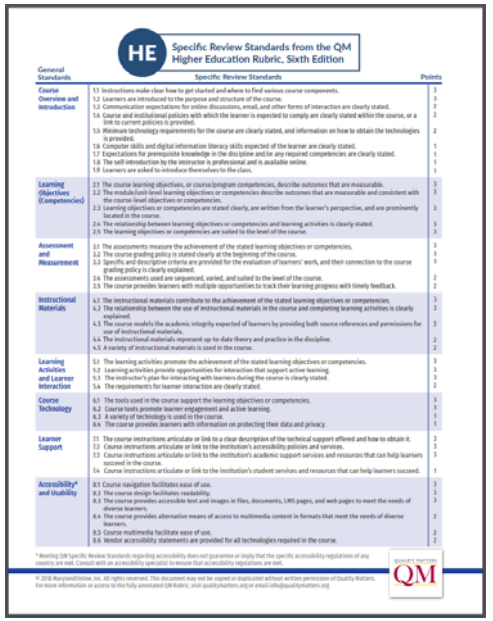
QM Higher Education Rubric

42 Specific Standards

- ✓ Inter-related
- ✓ Alignment principle
- ✓ Supporting CBE
- ✓ LMS & tools agnostic



HE Specific Review Standards from the QM Higher Education Rubric, Sixth Edition

General Standards	Specific Review Standards	Points
Course Overview and Introduction	1.1 Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.	3
	1.2 Learners are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course.	3
	1.3 Communication expectations for online discussions, email, and other forms of interaction are clearly stated.	2
	1.4 Course and institutional policies with which the learner is expected to comply are clearly stated within the course, or a link to current policies is provided.	2
	1.5 Minimum technology requirements for the course are clearly stated, and information on how to obtain the technologies is provided.	2
	1.6 Computer skills and digital information literacy skills expected of the learner are clearly stated.	1
	1.7 Expectations for prerequisite knowledge in the discipline and/or any required competencies are clearly stated.	1
	1.8 The self-introduction by the instructor is professional and is available online.	1
	1.9 Learners are asked to introduce themselves to the class.	1
Learning Objectives (Competencies)	2.1 The course learning objectives, or course/program competencies, describe outcomes that are measurable.	3
	2.2 The module/unit-level learning objectives or competencies describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives or competencies.	3
	2.3 Learning objectives or competencies are stated clearly, are written from the learner's perspective, and are prominently located in the course.	3
	2.4 The relationship between learning objectives or competencies and learning activities is clearly stated.	3
	2.5 The learning objectives or competencies are suited to the level of the course.	3
Assessment and Measurement	3.1 The assessments measure the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies.	3
	3.2 The course grading policy is stated clearly at the beginning of the course.	3
	3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work, and their connection to the course grading policy is clearly explained.	3
	3.4 The assessments used are sequenced, varied, and suited to the level of the course.	2
	3.5 The course provides learners with multiple opportunities to track their learning progress with timely feedback.	2
Instructional Materials	4.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies.	3
	4.2 The relationship between the use of instructional materials in the course and completing learning activities is clearly explained.	3
	4.3 The course models the academic integrity expected of learners by providing both source references and permissions for use of online/print materials.	3
	4.4 The instructional materials represent up-to-date theory and practice in the discipline.	2
	4.5 A variety of instructional materials is used in the course.	2
Learning Activities and Learner Interaction	5.1 The learning activities promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies.	3
	5.2 Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning.	3
	5.3 The instructor's plan for interacting with learners during the course is clearly stated.	2
	5.4 The requirements for learner interaction are clearly stated.	2
Course Technology	6.1 The tools used in the course support the learning objectives or competencies.	3
	6.2 Course tools promote learner engagement and active learning.	3
	6.3 A variety of technology is used in the course.	1
	6.4 The course provides learners with information on protecting their data and privacy.	1
Learner Support	7.1 The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to obtain it.	3
	7.2 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility policies and services.	3
	7.3 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's academic support services and resources that can help learners succeed in the course.	3
	7.4 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's student services and resources that can help learners succeed.	1
Accessibility* and Usability	8.1 Course navigation facilitates ease of use.	3
	8.2 The course design facilitates readability.	3
	8.3 The course provides accessible text and images in files, documents, LMS pages, and web pages to meet the needs of diverse learners.	3
	8.4 The course provides alternative means of access to multimedia content in formats that meet the needs of diverse learners.	2
	8.5 Course multimedia facilitate ease of use.	2
	8.6 Vendor accessibility statements are provided for all technologies required in the course.	2

* Meeting QM Specific Review Standards regarding accessibility does not guarantee or imply that the specific accessibility regulations of any country are met. Consult with an accessibility specialist to ensure that accessibility regulations are met.

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General Standard 2: Learning Objectives (Competencies)

Learning objectives or competencies describe what learners will be able to do upon completion of the course.

SPECIFIC REVIEW STANDARDS	POINTS	MET	NOT MET	ANNOTATIONS
2.1 The course learning objectives, or course/program competencies, describe outcomes that are measurable.	3			**Alignment:** The concept of alignment is intended to convey the idea that critical course components work together to ensure that learners achieve the desired learning outcomes. Measurable course and module/unit-level learning objectives or competencies form the basis of alignment in a course. Other elements of the course, including those addressed in Specific Review Standards 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, and 6.1, contribute to the accomplishment of the learning objectives or competencies. Measurable course learning objectives or competencies precisely and clearly describe what learners will learn and be able to do if they successfully complete the course. Course objectives or competencies describe desired learner mastery using terms that are specific and observable enough to be measured by the instructor. At some institutions, learning objectives or competencies may be called "learning outcomes." See the Glossary for a distinction between these two terms. If the Course Worksheet indicates institutionally mandated learning objectives/competencies are used in the course, see Special Situations at the end of this Annotation for directions. Examples of measurable learning outcomes or competencies: Upon completion of the course (module/unit), learners will be able to: 1. Select appropriate tax strategies for different financial and personal situations. 2. Develop a comprehensive, individualized wellness action program focused on overcoming a sedentary life-style. 3. Demonstrate correct use of personal protective equipment. 4. Articulate personal attitudes and values related to the use of medical marijuana. 5. Apply microeconomic principles to explain why environmental problems occur. 6. Create original musical compositions using computer technology. 7. Analyze a business situation to determine an information management need.

ANNOTATIONS CONTINUED

Examples of learning outcomes or competencies that are not measurable:

Upon completion of the course (module/unit), learners will be able to:

1. Understand the nature of reasoning.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the role of digital marketing.
3. Know basic statistical vocabulary and appropriate data collection methods.
4. Learn the basic elements of a media production software interface.
5. Be aware of the grammar conventions of standard American English.
6. Realize the significance of recent advances in genetic research.
7. Demonstrate an appreciation of contemporary art.

These types of learning outcomes are very difficult, if not impossible, to measure.

Reviewers, look for measurable learning objectives or competencies that describe what learners will be able to do once they "understand" or "know" or "realize" a concept in the course. For example, a learning objective or competency that calls for the learner to "understand the nature of reasoning" could become a measurable learning objective or competency by recommending that "understand" be replaced by the verb "explain": "Explain the nature of reasoning."

In a course in which learners are expected to demonstrate "core competencies," such as analytical skills or ability to express themselves effectively in writing or in other forms of communication, the course includes a reference to these foundational, core objectives or competencies in addition to objectives or competencies that relate to course-specific mastery of content. For instance, if the institution has a writing-across-the-curriculum requirement, the instructor of a course in economics may be expected to evaluate the effectiveness of learners' writing as well as their mastery of principles of economics. Accordingly, objectives or competencies related to writing effectiveness will be included in the course.

In addition to measurable objectives or competencies, a course may have objectives or competencies or desired outcomes that are not easily measured, such as increased awareness of, sensitivity to, or interest in certain issues or subjects, or ability to work as a team member on a group project. Such objectives or competencies cannot be substituted for measurable objectives or competencies when determining whether Specific Review Standard 2.1 is met.

In order for the Specific Review Standard to be met, a majority (85%) of the course-level objectives or competencies must be measurable.

Special Situations: In some cases (check the Course Worksheet), the course objectives or competencies are institutionally mandated, and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. If the institutionally mandated learning objectives or competencies are not measurable, make note of it in your recommendations. Write specific suggestions for improvement that can be used at the institution level to frame objectives or competencies in terms that are measurable. If the course objectives or competencies are institutionally mandated, then the reviewer may need to consider Specific Review Standard 2.1 in conjunction with Specific Review Standard 2.2, as follows:

Specific Review Standard 2.1 is MET under either of the following circumstances:

1. The course objectives or competencies are measurable, whether set by the institution or by the instructor.
2. The institutionally mandated course objectives or competencies are not measurable, but the instructor-written module/unit-level objectives or competencies are measurable and aligned with the course objectives or competencies.

Specific Review Standard 2.1 is NOT MET under any of the following circumstances:

1. There are no stated course objectives or competencies.
2. The course objectives or competencies set by the instructor are not measurable.
3. The institutionally mandated course objectives or competencies are not measurable, and the instructor-written module/unit-level objectives or competencies are either not measurable or not present.

If Specific Review Standard 2.1 is NOT MET, it is not possible to complete the course review. If you determine this Specific Review Standard is "Not Met," consult with the Team Chair before proceeding with your review. In such a case, the review is suspended and the Team Chair consults the Course Representative to clarify whether or not the matter can be quickly addressed so the review can continue.

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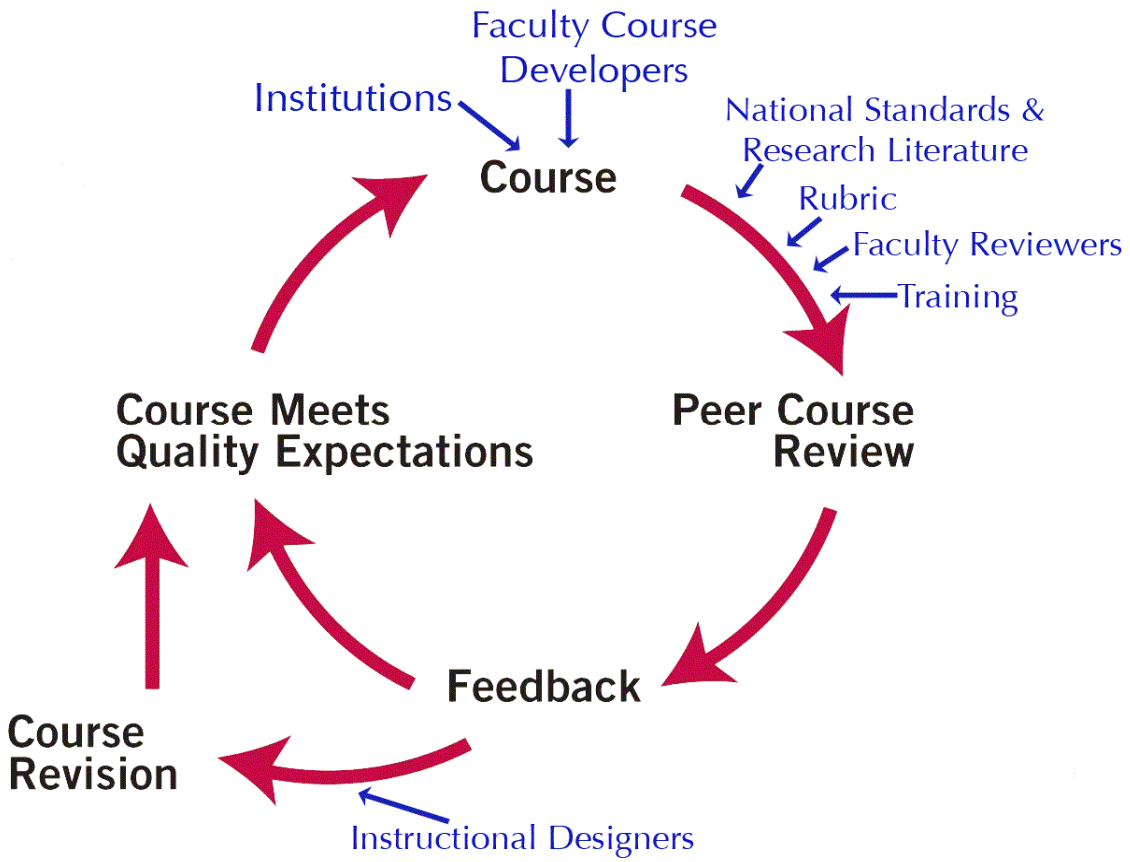
QM Peer-Review Process



Quality at Course Level

QM Course Certifications

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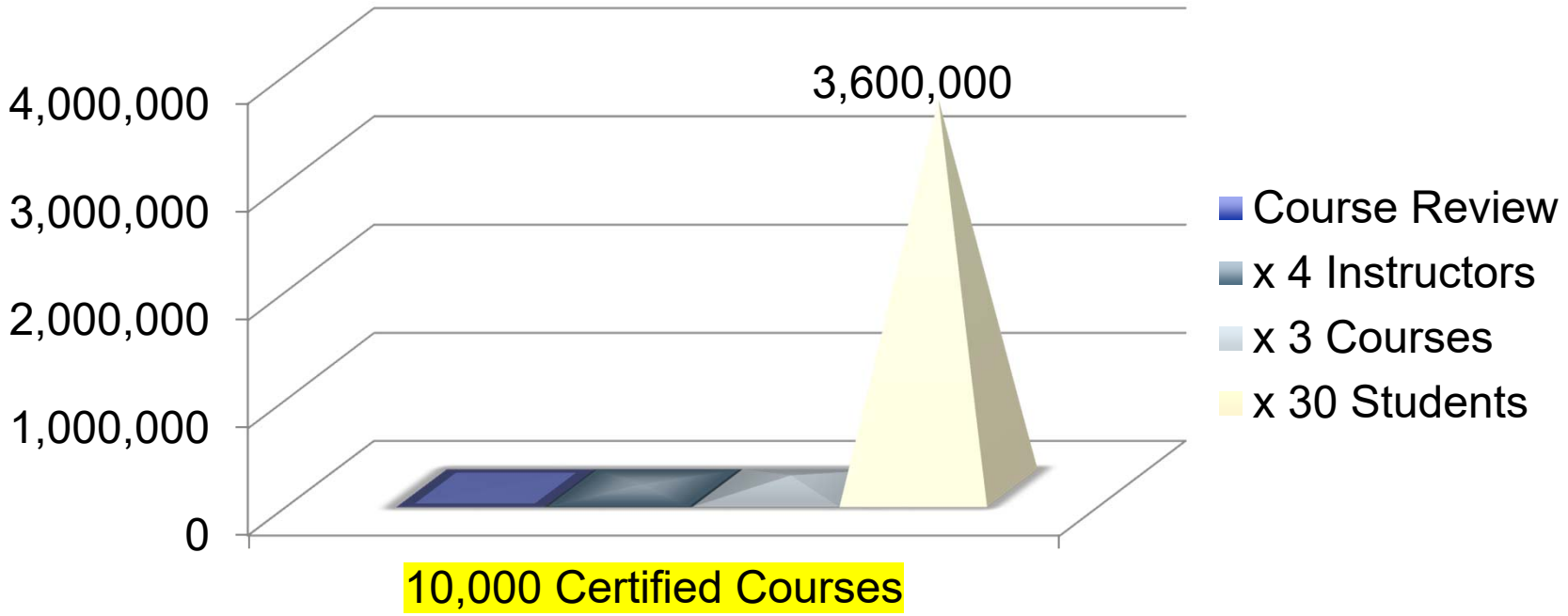
Continuous Improvement at Scale



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Quality at Course Level

QM Rubric Standards for Course Design

- ✓ **Workshop Activity 3:**

  Group discussion on 1-2 QM General Standards:

  What specific standards are most challenging for courses to meet? Why?

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Ensure Quality at *Institution/Program/Course* Levels

- ✓ **Reflection & Discussion:**

  - What should/can institutional leadership do?
  - What should/can my department/unit do?
  - What should/can I do?

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Adapting QM to Institutional Needs

- ✓ Strategic goals & accreditation needs
- ✓ Benchmarking & establishing QA process
- ✓ Influence on institutional culture
- ✓ Implementation based on resources
- ✓ Faculty-centered governance & buy-in
- ✓ Ongoing faculty development
- ✓ Improved courses to help students learn

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Building QM Communities!

Let's Connect, Communicate, and Collaborate!

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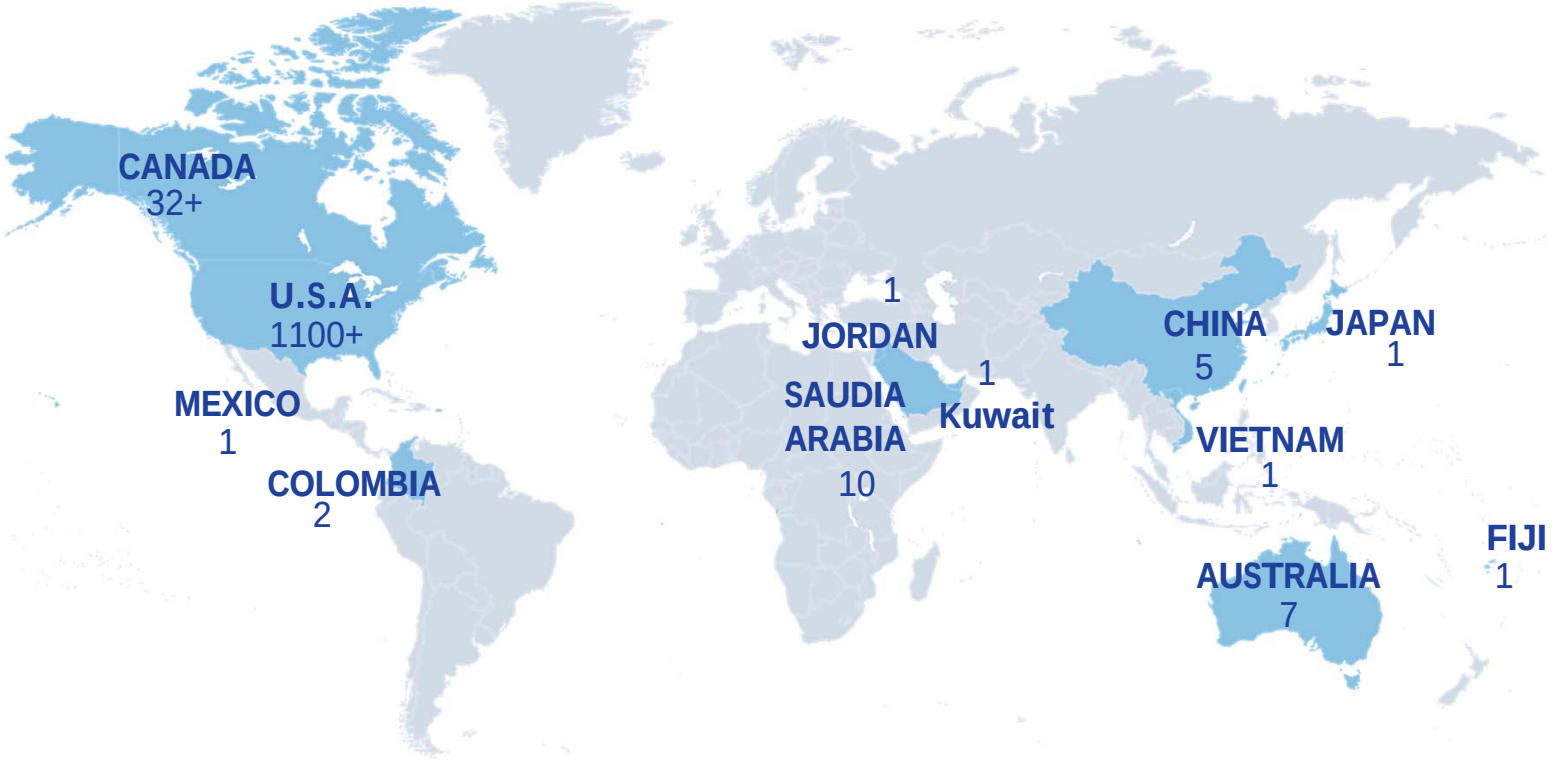
1,170+ QM Member Institutions



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