



To The Editor

Is the Divide Digital? March/April 2000

I have read with interest your comments in TechKnowLogia and in particular the reference you make to the need for changes in educational behavior. I recently attended the GKII conference in Malaysia and was disappointed that there was less attention given to this subject than I had hoped. However, I am pleased to say that the need for "knowledge-based education" was included in the draft action plan, which emerged from the Action Summit.

LESLEY ANDREWS
United Kingdom

Is Virtual Education for Real? Issues of Quality and Accreditation Jan/Feb 2000

Having read your article with extreme interest I would like to present my comments on this subject.

Introduction

I believe that there are three specific areas to be accredited, each presenting increasingly bigger challenges. These are; the accreditation of the actual delivery mechanisms, the accreditation of the materials used and the accreditation of the outcomes. This I see to be the 'Holy Grail'.

As a manifestation of the increase in electronic and open distance learning in Europe (and worldwide), I consider that there should be a single, independent international body that accredits and is the recognized professional body that offers a model of best practice for Electronic and Open Distance Learning. As electronic distance learning is becoming the common form of educational delivery for training, in particular vocational training, throughout Europe and worldwide, it is essential that there is a recognized standard for the delivery of such training. This would provide the beneficiaries with the reassurance of quality and it would also serve to ensure that the providers maintain their standards of practice. It is such true public accountability that provides user credibility.

The Objective

The objective of the such a body would be to ensure that all electronic and open distance learning delivery reaches an international credible standard that is both acceptable and beneficial for the client.

The Accreditation Criteria

I believe the following criteria form the basis of the accreditation process: the tutoring and the quality of the delivery including assessment and moderation procedures; the quality of the materials and the curriculum; the electronic management of the system; the pastoral and academic support of the client; and the fiscal and administrative capacity of the provider. I have researched this field quite extensively and have much more information on the above criteria and how this can be measured. I see that this body would have to be supported by an advisory panel, comprising of industry, education and government experts, to oversee the whole operation. Of course there would be subsidiary committees responsible for specific technical areas. I hope that the above comments are of interest to you and I look forward to any response that you or your colleagues may have.

Regards,

JEREMY P LUCAS
London, UK

General Feedback

After reading the first few issues of *TechKnowLogia*, I want to congratulate you on your site and journal. Our Director, Mark Schneider, recently announced that Peace Corps will take advantage of the information technology skills that our 7500 Volunteers have brought with them to assignments in all sectors in 77 countries. Peace Corps has begun to integrate ICTs into all of its projects. *TechKnowLogia* will be a particularly valuable tool for us in this effort as a source of information, ideas, resources, and reference to potential partners. Best wishes for continued success.

Kelly Morris
Manager, Peace Corps

I appreciate the efforts and believe that I am going to be benefited by it. My heartiest congratulations on this effort.

Academic Fellow
Indian Institute of Management, India

At St. Jude we are in process of developing a program in northeast Brazil to establish adequate treatment for children with cancer. We are using a combination of advanced computer technologies (telemedicine) for education and would like to use cheaper strategies to deploy information in the poorer areas. Many of your journal articles contain pertinent information on these issues.

Director, International Outreach Program
Associate Member, Department of Hematology/Oncology
Brazil

Thank you very much. It is such an interesting site, especially useful for my studies (MED in IT).

Lecturer
Centre for the Advancement of
Science and Mathematics Education
South Africa

Let me congratulate you for bringing out this excellent Journal for the Advancement of Knowledge and Learning. I came to know of it very recently through a list server notification and I am amazed by the collection of articles. I think a journal in this area focusing on Knowledge Networking and Learning has a niche of its own.

I am sure it will be very useful for development practitioners and organizations, especially those in the developing world to have access to the updated research and models being developed. I would be happy to see more developing world case studies in it.

Program Office
Sustainable Development Networking Programme
India

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