Developing the Best Online Teachers:

Insights from the National Standards for Quality

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR QUALITY

NSQ

dlac QM VLLA

NSQOL.ORG

Introductions

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What are the Standards?

- **The National Standards for Quality Online Learning (NSQOL) has been the benchmark for online programs, districts and state agencies since 2007.**

- **A set of research-based guidelines to support**
  - Online Programs
  - Online Courses
  - Online Teaching

- **The standards are openly licensed and designed with flexibility, allowing leaders to adapt them to meet the unique needs of various program types.**

www.nsqol.org

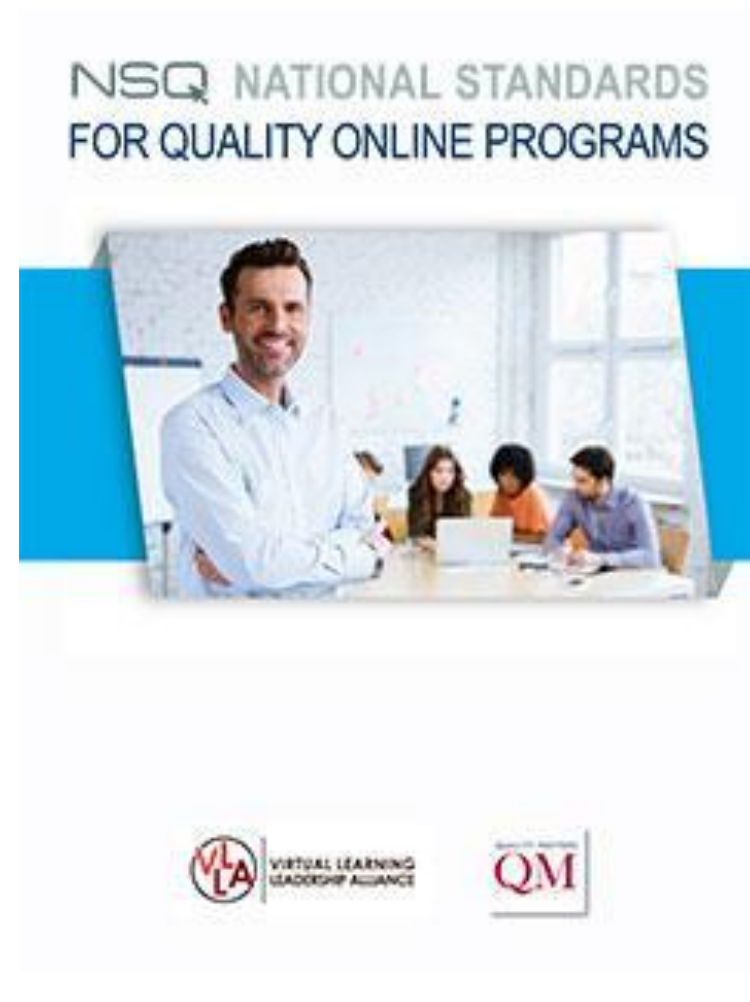# NSQOL is a true community effort!

- **Three organizations that co-steward the standards with guidance from the NSQ leadership team:**
  - Quality Matters (QM)
  - Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance (VLLA)
  - DLAC

- **Community Volunteers to Review and Make Recommendations**. (2023-2025, latest review):
  - Online learning community effort including practitioners and researchers
  - Review of research
  - Survey and focus groups

Review Process

- Literature Review
- Focus Groups
  - K-12
  - Higher Ed
  - Teachers
  - Researchers
  - Leadership
- Workgroup Focused Efforts
- Multiple Revisions
  - Feedback from
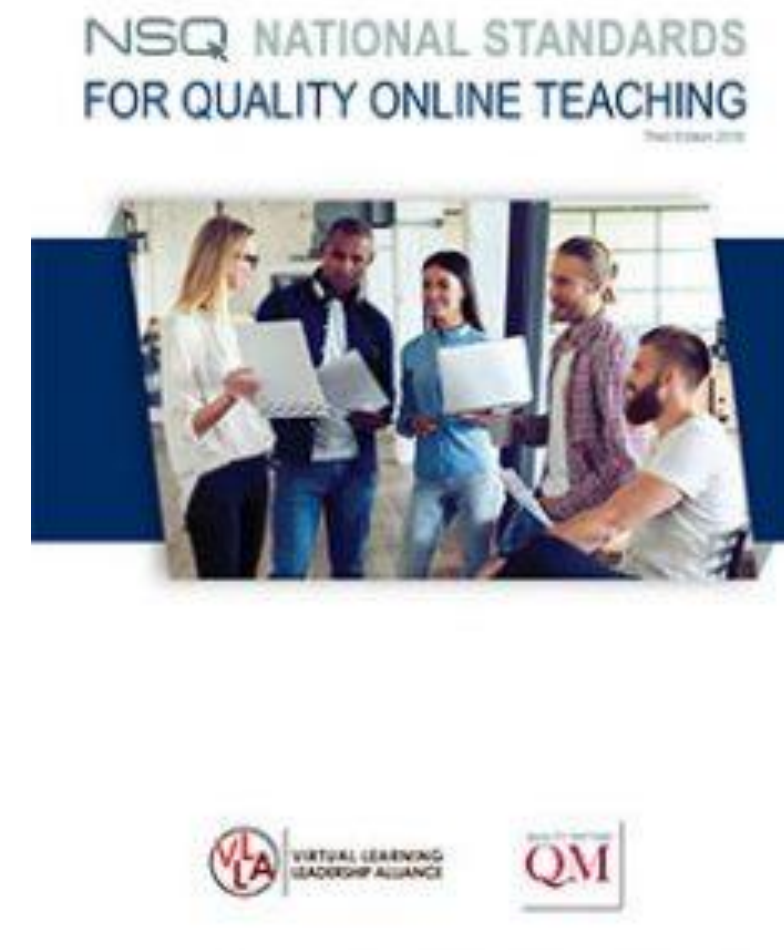   - Leadership Team
    - Co-Chairs from Other Standard Sets

The Standards: 2019 to 2025

Refresh

Refresh

Revision

The Standards

NSQ NATIONAL STANDARDS
FOR QUALITY ONLINE PROGRAMS

Focuses on the organizational and operational aspects.

NSQ NATIONAL STANDARDS
FOR QUALITY ONLINE COURSES

Ensures high-quality instructional content and design.

NSQ NATIONAL STANDARDS
FOR QUALITY ONLINE TEACHING

Defines best practices for online educators.

National Standards for Quality Online Teaching

Standard A: Professional Responsibilities

- Teachers meet certification requirements and follow ethical guidelines.
- Engage in ongoing professional development.

Standard B: Digital Citizenship

- Promote responsible use of technology.
- Ensure student privacy and academic integrity.

Standard C: Engagement and Belonging

- Foster an inclusive online learning community.
- Provide timely communication and feedback.

Standard D: Learner-Centered Instruction

- Use data-driven strategies to personalize learning.
- Support students with assistive technologies.

Standard E: Instructional Design (when applicable)

- Align course content with learning objectives.
- Develop assessments and use technology efficiently.

NSQ Online Teaching: 2019 to 2025

- **Restructured Standards:** The original eight standards have been consolidated into five, with indicators organized by increasing complexity.
- **Deleted Standards**
- **Renamed Standards**
- **Revised Language:** Indicators have been reworded to clearly delineate "What" (the indicator itself), "Why" (Intent), and "How" (Application).

https://nsqol.org/the-standards/quality-online-teaching/

NSQ Online Teaching: 2019 to 2025

Considerable Broad Changes

This edition of the National Standards for Quality Online Teaching has some significant changes in comparison to the previous releases.

1. Indicators have been reworded to focus on what needs to occur in online teaching. Language explaining the why has been moved to explanations and language on how has been moved to examples.
2. Standards and indicators under each standard are now organized in order of increasing complexity.

Considerable Standard and Indicator Changes

1. Standard B: Digital Pedagogy has been deleted and the indicators moved under other standards.
2. Standard C: Community Building and Standard D: Learner Engagement have been merged into the new Standard C: Engagement and Belonging.
3. Standard F: Diverse Instruction was renamed Standard D: Learner-Centered Instruction. The indicators under the new standard address the needs of all learners, including those with disabilities.
4. Standard G: Assessment and Measurement has been deleted and the indicators moved under other standards.

	National Standards for Quality Online Teaching: Third Edition (2019)	National Standards for Quality Online Teaching: Fourth Edition (2025)
Number of standards	8	5
Number of indicators	51	37

https://nsqol.org/the-standards/quality-online-teaching/

Standards, Indicators, Intent and Application

STANDARD D: LEARNER-CENTERED INSTRUCTION

The online teacher personalizes instruction based on the learner's academic, social, and emotional needs.

D1 The online teacher collaborates with stakeholders.

INTENT

Teachers should engage stakeholders in order to ensure alignment between course objectives and the learners' needs.

Collaboration between the online teacher and stakeholders is critical in order to personalize instruction to meet individual learner needs.

APPLICATION

After reviewing the IEP or 504 accommodations, the teacher contacts the school to ensure the learner has the required adaptive technology. The online teacher also shares training videos on the hardware/software with the parent/guardian, as required.

The teacher works with their data department to extract useful, actionable data from the LMS regarding learner behavior and makes adjustments.

The teacher analyzes data that demonstrating that learners who submit their assignments within three days of the timeline score higher than those who miss this window. The teacher implements incentives and increases communications with families to encourage learners to submit assignments within three days of the due date.

The teacher collaborates with parents/guardians/learning coach during virtual conferences to set realistic academic goals and strategies, such as establishing study schedules or identifying preferred learning tools.

Using the Standards

Professional Learning

- Schools and programs are designing professional learning around the standards
- Universities are developing courses for pre-service and inservice teachers for degree programs and certifications

Teacher Evaluation

- Instructional Leaders are using the standards to evaluate and provide feedback to online teachers
  - NSQ has created a crosswalk document aligned to the Danielson Framework to support evaluations
- Self evaluation - 2gnoMe Professional Learning Portal

How are you using the teaching standards?

RESOURCES

Current Resources

- S.I.P. - Standards in Practice
- Danielson Crosswalk (Updating)
- NSQ Online Teaching Professional Learning Portal

Are there other resources that would be helpful for your implementation?

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