The Online Course Excellence Toolkit

Navigating Intentional Pedagogy, Meaningful Student Engagement, and Robust Faculty Support

By the DEC 2025 Digital & Online Learning Working Group

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Executive Summary

The DEC Online Course Excellence Toolkit is a practical resource developed to support higher education institutions in designing, delivering, and scaling high-quality online and hybrid learning.

As online education shifts from crisis response to long-term strategy, many institutions face persistent challenges —from low student engagement and lack of faculty support to fragmented efforts and misaligned strategies.

This toolkit was created by the Digital Education Council (DEC) Digital & Online Learning Working Group 2025, drawing on real-world case studies and contributions from 26 institutional leaders across diverse regions.

It introduces a framework built around three interdependent dimensions: intentional pedagogy, meaningful student engagement, and robust faculty support.

These elements form a virtuous cycle that underpins sustainable and impactful online learning.

Designed for institutional leaders, programme designers, faculty and technical teams, the toolkit offers:

- The Virtuous Cycle of Online Learning, a coherent framework supported by structured reflection questions and measurement indicators
- Real-world institutional practices that showcase innovative approaches to online learning
- Actionable recommendations to address the most pressing challenges in digital education

Regardless of an institution's stage in their digital efforts, this toolkit offers a practical and informed pathway to move from experimentation to excellence in online learning.

Objectives and Methodology

This Online Course Excellence Toolkit was developed by the Digital Education Council (DEC) Digital & Online Learning Working Group 2025, chaired by Todd Nicolet, Vice Provost for Digital and Lifelong Learning at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with contributions from delegates representing 26 higher education institutions across the globe.

This Toolkit was created to assist higher education institutional leaders, programme managers and developers, faculty members, and technical teams with the aim to:

1. **Support Quality Online Education**
   Provide a structured framework to ensure online programmes meet high standards in design, delivery, and learner engagement.

2. **Enhance Teaching and Learning Effectiveness**
   Offer best practices, strategies, and tools that help faculty and course designers create engaging, inclusive, and outcome-driven online learning experiences.

3. **Enable Strategic Planning and Readiness**
   Guide institutions in assessing their readiness and capacity to launch or scale online programmes successfully.

4. **Foster Student-Centric Approaches**
   Promote learner engagement, accessibility, and retention through thoughtful pedagogical and technological approaches.

5. **Encourage Continuous Improvement**
   Establish benchmarks and feedback mechanisms for ongoing evaluation and refinement of online offerings.

6. **Bridge Pedagogy and Technology**
   Help institutions align technological tools with sound instructional design to enhance learner outcomes.

Grounded in cross-institutional collaboration, the toolkit was shaped through a series of iterative discussions focused on the most pressing challenges in digital and online learning—specifically in the areas of pedagogy, student engagement, and faculty support. Drawing on real-world case studies and institutional experiences shared by the working group members, the toolkit identifies the core components of effective online learning programmes and provides a practical set of measurement indicators. These indicators are designed to help institutions assess the quality of their existing programmes, uncover areas for improvement, and drive meaningful change.

This collaborative and evidence-informed approach ensures the toolkit is both globally relevant and grounded in practical application.

The Online Learning Landscape

The global acceleration of online learning — initially a response to the COVID-19 crisis — has now crystallised into a long-term strategic opportunity for higher education. Yet for many institutions, the shift remains uneven, often characterised by pilot projects or fragmented digital efforts. To move forward, institutions must consider not just innovation, but long-term sustainability: building online and hybrid learning models that are pedagogically sound, operationally viable, and able to scale over time. These modalities are increasingly recognised not as temporary solutions, but as essential components of an inclusive, resilient, and future-ready education system.

This transformation is occurring alongside two parallel shifts: the rise of lifelong learning as a societal norm and the growing demand for workforce-aligned, accessible education that transcends traditional campus boundaries. In this context institutions must move beyond isolated digital projects and toward integrated strategies that embed digital and online learning into their mission, pedagogy, and operational models.

Key Challenges Faced by Institutions Globally

Discussions and case studies from the working group revealed that institutions across regions face recurring barriers in realising the full potential of online education.

Across contexts, these challenges often emerge not just from technical gaps, but from how institutions design, deliver, and sustain meaningful learning experiences and how they support the educators and students at the core of those experiences.

Table 1. Common Institution Challenges

Challenge	Description
Student Engagement and Retention	Feelings of isolation, lack of academic connection, and poor course design continue to undermine student persistence in online environments.
Limited Faculty Development	Faculty are frequently expected to teach online without adequate preparation or development in digital pedagogy, while support structures —such as instructional design teams—vary widely in both availability and maturity.
Fragmented Institutional Strategies	Many institutions operate with decentralised or siloed approaches to online learning, leading to inconsistent programme quality and duplicated efforts across faculties and units.
Lack of Shared Vocabulary and Quality Standards	Terms such as “flexible,” “blended,” or “engaging” are used inconsistently across academic leaders, faculty, and operational teams, leading to confusion and misaligned expectations.
Disconnect Between Technology and Strategy	Institutions often adopt tools without considering pedagogical alignment and implementation needs. Conversely, institutions may develop strategic goals that lack the necessary technological infrastructure, resulting in gaps in adoption, accessibility, and impact.

These challenges are not insurmountable—but addressing them requires coordinated effort, shared learning, and tools grounded in practice.

This toolkit is designed to serve exactly that purpose: a practical companion for institutions ready to move from experimentation to excellence.

Introducing the DEC Online Course Excellence Toolkit

The DEC Online Programme Excellence Toolkit offers a structured approach for institutions to reflect on and strengthen their online learning strategies. It is a set of considerations framed as critical questions digital learning leaders should be asking themselves and their organisations, accompanied by practical measurement indicators to help assess progress and identify areas for improvement. It serves as both a reflective guide and an action-oriented resource for building more coherent, sustainable, and impactful digital learning strategies.

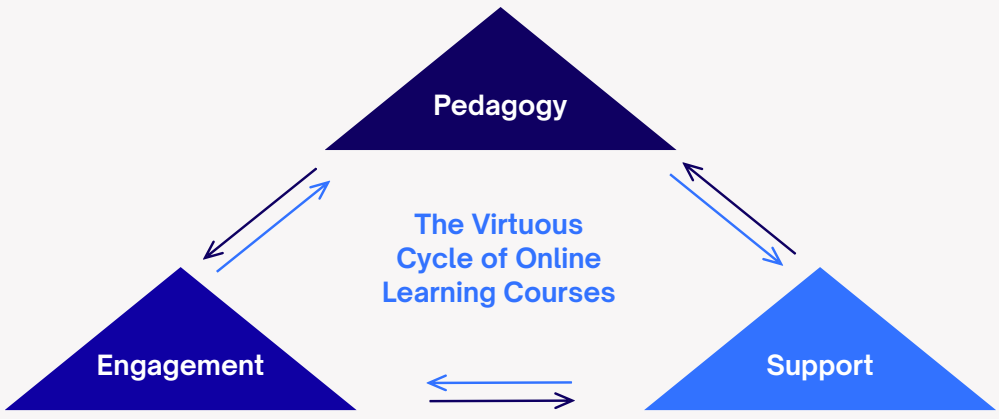
The Virtuous Cycle: Pedagogy, Engagement, and Support

Drawing from the collective work of the 2025 DEC Digital & Online Learning Working Group, this toolkit is built on a simple but powerful proposition: successful online programmes require intentional pedagogy, meaningful student engagement, and robust faculty support. Together, these three dimensions reinforce one another, creating a virtuous cycle:

- **Intentional pedagogy** ensures that both what we teach and how we teach it meet the needs of learners with diverse backgrounds, learning preferences, and varying levels of access to digital tools and environments.
- **Meaningful engagement strategies** ensure that students feel connected, motivated, and able to persist through challenges.
- **Robust faculty support** ensures that those delivering the learning are equipped, confident, and aligned with broader goals.

The next section offers a deeper exploration of how institutions can assess their readiness and effectiveness in online learning. Each key area is linked to measurable indicators and probing questions that can reveal design strengths and gaps.

Figure 1. The Virtuous Cycle of Online Learning Courses



Dimension 1: Pedagogical Models and Learning Design

Key Area	Examples of Diagnostic Questions	Examples of Measurement Indicators
Effective Online Course Design	• Do course designs align with defined learning outcomes grounded in learning sciences? • Do course designs provide a structured progression of learning experiences across the institution? • How are online cohorts formed to promote peer learning and belonging? • Do we track student motivation and engagement across the course lifecycle? • Is there intentional use of synchronous and asynchronous modes? • Do course structures reflect diverse learner needs and provide consistent navigation and pacing? • Are accessibility principles (e.g. inclusive formats, alt text, contrast) embedded at the course design stage to support diverse learners? • Is there institution-level support available to create and review online course material? • Does the course design allow for customisation to meet the needs of different learners, industries, or learning pathways?	• Use of design templates or established frameworks such as Bloom's or Fink's Taxonomy • Completion and progression data at course and programme levels • Presence of intentional strategies to foster online learning communities • Student feedback on clarity and flow • Presence of elective pathways, personalised pacing, or embedded microcredentials within course structures
Digital Assessment & Integrity	• Are assessments formative and aligned with digital delivery contexts? • Are policies on AI use, collaboration, and plagiarism clear and enforced? • Is assessment designed to meaningfully demonstrate student learning? • How are students supported in understanding academic integrity expectations?	• Use of diverse assessment formats to support different learning outcomes and learner needs • Student performance and progression • Incidents of academic misconduct • Student understanding of integrity policies

Key Area	Examples of Diagnostic Questions	Examples of Measurement Indicators
AI & Tech-Enhanced Learning	• Are AI or advanced tech tools used with a clear pedagogical purpose? • Do faculty and students understand when and how these tools are appropriate? • Is there institutional guidance to support responsible experimentation?	• Adoption and usage of AI or EdTech tools • Faculty uptake and training participation • Feedback on tool impact
Quality Assurance Mechanisms	• Are there shared quality standards for online learning design and delivery across the institution? • Is peer or instructional design review integrated into programme cycles? • How is student feedback , including on course design, delivery, and learning experience, collected and used to inform improvements? • Are there established processes to periodically and systematically review and update online learning design, content, and technologies?	• Review cycle student completion rates • Rubric or standard usage • Feedback loop effectiveness • Number of courses certified internally or by external means • Number / type of programmes certified internally / by external agencies
Integrated Learning Ecosystems	• Are programmes coordinated to reduce content duplication and promote cross-departmental synergy? • Are there shared processes or platforms for developing and reusing learning content? • Can students meaningfully integrate learning from outside the formal curriculum (e.g. internships, community service learning, on-campus or cross-departmental courses) into their academic progression?	• Use of shared content repositories or cross-faculty development processes • Proportion of programmes with cross-disciplinary or shared modules • Availability of online support for co-curricular or professional learning activities

Institutional Success Highlights

Institutionalised quality assurance and faculty collaboration
University of Saskatchewan

The University of Saskatchewan ran a Course Quality Review initiative for high-enrolment online courses. Instructional designers collaborated closely with faculty using a standardised rubric to evaluate design, accessibility, and learner engagement. This model helped build institutional culture around quality online teaching and expanded the role of learning design teams.

Scalable faculty training and support
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

UNC Chapel Hill developed a cohort-based, online faculty training module with variable follow up support to meet specific faculty needs. The two-week intensive experience enabled faculty to collaborate and learn in an online format similar to what they might develop for students, exploring how pedagogical best practices could be applied to their specific activities and courses. In the weeks following the synchronous and asynchronous activities, faculty continued to have access to their cohort colleagues as well as one-on-one coaching and design sessions with an experienced instructional designer.

Framework for a common language about quality online learning
Ateneo de Manila University

Ateneo implemented a framework called Adaptive Design for Learning, that brings together key ideas and best practices from research in online learning and the learning sciences.The framework introduces core principles that provide common language for the desired quality of online and/or blended learning design of courses. It continues to be a reference for academic policy formulation and faculty formation. Faculty learn about the framework through an online course that supports them in applying the principles in the design and facilitation of their respective courses.

Structured Content, Engaged Learning: The Amity Online Approach
Amity University Online

Amity Online's content is grounded in robust pedagogical models and instructional design principles, ensuring that every course delivers a high-impact learning experience. The content development process follows structured development guidelines, standardised templates, and a well-defined workflow to maintain consistency, quality, and learner-centricity across all programs. Furthermore, online and offline workshops are an integral part of the learning journey—offering real-time interaction, practical exposure, and collaborative learning opportunities. These workshops serve as crucial bridges between theoretical knowledge and real-world application, ensuring a holistic and immersive academic experience.

Scalable integration of third-party content and AI-enabled tools
Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (UPC)

UPC built a 360° digital learning ecosystem by embedding Coursera into 75 undergraduate and 33 graduate programmes. Supported by internal funding and instructional design teams, the initiative included AI-enabled tools like Course Builder, Coursera Coach, AI Grading, and Machine Translate to enhance design, support, and accessibility. Faculty engagement was fostered through initiatives such as Faculty Academy, Career Academy, and #LideroMiAprendizaje. The model improved institutional efficiency and learner outcomes, with over 546,000 certificates issued, an 81.38% completion rate, and a 34% reduction in course design costs.

Dimension 2: Engaging Students in Digital Learning

Key Area	Examples of Diagnostic Questions	Examples of Measurement Indicators
Student Readiness and Onboarding	• Does the institution provide structured orientation that builds the skills and expectations needed for successful digital learning? • Are onboarding materials tailored to different levels of learner experience with technology or self-paced learning? • Is there support for helping students transition into the culture and demands of online or hybrid programmes?	• Student confidence ratings before and after onboarding • Participation in pre-course support activities • Early-course engagement data (e.g. activity within first week)
Social Presence & Belonging	• Do students feel part of a learning community? • Are there intentional strategies to foster peer interaction and a sense of presence? • Is community-building embedded into course design? • How is instructor to student engagement achieved?	• Student feedback on belonging and inclusion • Participation in social/peer activities
Interaction & Participation	• How frequent and meaningful are interactions with instructors, peers, and content? • Are student engagement activities intentionally designed to promote meaningful collaboration, rather than simply requiring participation?	• Discussion board participation • Live session attendance • Peer-to-peer activity tracking
Feedback & Responsiveness	• Are students receiving timely, actionable feedback? • Are communication practices across courses and platforms clear and consistent for students? • How do we address student questions and concerns in a timely manner?	• Feedback turnaround time • Student satisfaction surveys • Helpdesk or message response time

Key Area	Examples of Diagnostic Questions	Examples of Measurement Indicators
Engagement Monitoring & Alerts	• Do we track appropriate engagement trends over time? • Are there nudging or early alert systems to address disengagement? • How are insights shared with faculty and support teams? • How is the efficacy of those systems tracked? How are students' experiences documented and analysed?	• Platform activity data • Dropout or inactivity flags • Use of learning analytics dashboards • Learning progress or progress along the course content
Accessibility & Inclusion	• Are courses accessible to students with disabilities? • Are courses accessible to students with limited tech access? • Do students from diverse backgrounds feel represented and supported? • Are digital tools inclusive by design?	• Presence of accessibility policy • Use of closed captioning/alt text • Disaggregated engagement by demographic group
Course & Programme Retention	• Are students' completion of courses tracked? • Does the institution track and report on persistence to completion of a course, programme, or credential? • How are these data (course completion and programme completion) analysed to improve the number and diversity of learners?	• Course completion rates by academic / training discipline • Program persistence and completion data by program • Employment outcomes for graduates within 6 to 12 months

Institutional Success Highlights

Analytics-driven personalisation and learner support
Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (UPC)

UPC embedded reflection prompts and engagement checkpoints within asynchronous course modules, allowing students to share feedback at specific moments in their learning journey. These inputs were analysed and fed into advising systems via learning analytics dashboards, enabling timely interventions and personalised academic support. The integration of instructional and data support teams enhanced the responsiveness of teaching and student services.

Real-time feedback loops in hybrid delivery
Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)

HKUST implemented dashboards and live surveys to capture student sentiment and comprehension during hybrid learning. Faculty were trained to interpret this feedback and adjust instruction dynamically, enabling real-time responsiveness. The approach was supported by institutional templates and design models that ensured consistent engagement while allowing for instructional flexibility across modalities.

Gamified social learning and sustained motivation
FLAME University

FLAME University designed online learning experiences to foster active participation and community through gamified peer challenges, collaborative activities, and continuous feedback loops. These strategies were particularly effective in asynchronous environments, creating a sense of momentum and belonging. Faculty maintained high levels of student motivation by embedding opportunities for recognition, reflection, and peer exchange throughout each course.

Digital Community Platform
Amity University Online

Amity Online's beSocial platform is a vibrant digital community designed exclusively for its students, offering a dynamic virtual campus experience. This student engagement hub fosters meaningful connections, encourages collaboration, and reimagines how learners interact in an online environment. By bridging the gap between virtual education and real-time student engagement, beSocial creates opportunities for networking, personal growth, and academic collaboration. Whether it's teaming up on projects, celebrating achievements, sharing passions, or simply connecting with peers, students can thrive together in a supportive and interactive space.

Engagement of Students with Real-Life Meaningful Challenges in a Virtual Graduate Program in Artificial Intelligence
Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá

Between 2021 and 2024, the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá designed and launched a fully virtual graduate programme in Artificial Intelligence, with its first cohort graduating in late 2024. A standout feature of the programme was a team-based design component that required students to work synchronously on real-world challenges relevant to their professional or social contexts. These design experiences were structured as online or in-person hackathons, providing flexibility while fostering interpersonal relationships and motivation through hands-on, applied learning. Students consistently rated this component as highly enriching, valuing the opportunity to apply what they had learned in practice, engage deeply with peers, and interact in person with faculty. Final projects were showcased as part of a broader effort to highlight student innovation and impact; and some of them have been used commercially.

Dimension 3: Supporting Educators for Digital Success

Key Area	Examples of Diagnostic Questions	Examples of Measurement Indicators
Faculty Development & Training	• Do educators receive structured onboarding in digital pedagogy and research based digital course design? • Is there ongoing access to training in emerging tools, including AI? • Is training aligned to programme goals? • Are educators actively engaged in shaping and contributing to digital learning practices across the institution?	• Participation in training programmes • Faculty confidence and satisfaction surveys • Post-training performance • Faculty contribution to resource development or peer training • Self-reported engagement with digital teaching initiatives
Workload, Incentives, and Intellectual Property	• Are online teaching responsibilities reflected in workload models? • Are incentives or recognition aligned with digital teaching excellence? • Are institutional IP policies transparent and fair regarding ownership of online and AI-enhanced content?	• Workload equity analysis • Recognition schemes • Options for content licensing or reuse consent • Clarity of ownership rights for faculty-created digital content
Instructional Design & Media Support	• Do faculty have access to professional support for designing and producing online courses? • How integrated are instructional design/media teams in curriculum cycles?	• Use of support services • Project completion timelines • Quality of media and instructional assets
Peer Collaboration & Mentorship	• Are there communities of practice or peer feedback loops for digital educators? • How are early-career or new-to-online faculty supported?	• Frequency of peer exchange • Mentorship programme uptake • Faculty-reported sense of support

Key Area	Examples of Diagnostic Questions	Examples of Measurement Indicators
Learning Platforms and Infrastructure	• Is the Learning Management System (LMS) consistently used to support teaching, communication, and feedback? • Does the platform offer usable data to inform teaching and support decisions? • Is the LMS accessible, intuitive, and aligned with course design standards? • Are instructors and students adequately onboarded and supported in its use? • Are there institutional efforts to create opportunities for faculty to engage in collaborative resource building and sharing?	• Platform usage rates by faculty and students • Availability and uptake of LMS training • Satisfaction with LMS usability • Integration of analytics tools for engagement or learning tracking • Faculty co-create instructional materials or regularly share best practices

Institutional Success Highlights

AI-powered insights and adaptive teaching support
North Carolina State University

NC State's DELTA unit developed AI-powered dashboards to help faculty monitor student engagement, drawing on natural language processing and sentiment analysis from discussion forums. These tools were integrated into hands-on faculty training sessions, known as AI clinics that guided instructors in applying insights to adapt pedagogy in real time. This combination of data and professional development enabled more responsive, learner-centred teaching.

Faculty support for MOOC development and strategic alignment
Singapore Management University (SMU)

SMU developed MOOCs aligned with its Sustainable Living strategic priority, including the course Climate Change: Past, Present and Future, to create flexible learning pathways for incoming students. Faculty received support through training workshops, individual consultations, and curated best practices provided by the Centre for Teaching Excellence. The university hired learning designers and technologists, enhanced its LMS and digital infrastructure, and introduced tools like an AI Teaching Assistant. Students engaged with online content before in-person seminars, and feedback showed high satisfaction, improved learner autonomy, and strong achievement of course outcomes.

Collaborative design and TA-supported delivery
Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (UPC)

UPC's Learning Innovation team worked closely with faculty to co-develop course content and integrate digital tools such as engagement triggers and analytics. The institution also deployed trained teaching assistants who played a dual role, facilitating learning and capturing data to inform real-time support. This model improved instructional responsiveness while easing faculty workload.

Upskilling support staff to address student engagement practices in a digital environment for online learning support
North-West University (NWU)

NWU conducted a needs analysis to identify individual and departmental requirements of distance education support staff. Based on these needs, tailored training content was developed to ensure relevance and practical value in their roles, supporting engaged online learning. To maximise participation and minimise disruption, training was delivered through short, interactive, hybrid sessions that allowed for flexible attendance.

Communities of practice for digital teaching
Virginia Tech

Virginia Tech's Technology-enhanced Learning and Online Strategies unit created semester-long faculty communities of practice (CoP) to build digital teaching expertise and align development with institutional goals. The model addressed gaps in faculty preparation and the limited impact of one-off workshops. Facilitators ground discussions in research and practice, while participants share strategies, tackle challenges, and co-design materials. Each CoP, supported by online collaboration, concludes with recommendations, projects, or course artifacts.

This sustained, collaborative approach fosters peer networks, generates reusable resources, and advances Virginia Tech's goals for quality online learning.

Final Reflections & Recommendations

Over the course of working group sessions involving institutions across regions, several consistent themes emerged that should guide institutional leaders and digital learning teams as they advance online programme design, delivery, and support. Rather than prescribing a single model, the following recommendations, synthesised from the working group's experience, offer foundational principles and strategic guidance to address the identified institutional challenges.

1. Prioritise Intentional Design over Content Delivery

Quality in online learning is not simply about making content available—it's about designing intentional learning experiences, which is the foundation for addressing the major challenges in online education. Success stems from applying pedagogical approaches specifically suited for online and hybrid environments, supported by continuous review and quality assurance. Without deliberate design, institutions risk undermining student outcomes and the reputation of their online provision.

Recommendation: Embed course design expertise early in programme planning. Establish feedback loops with learners and faculty to ensure continuous refinement and alignment with learning outcomes.

2. Position Student Engagement as a Strategic Priority

Engagement is not an "add-on" but a core component of online programme success. Student belonging, participation, and motivation must be actively designed and resourced. Lack of connection is a known driver of attrition in online settings.

Recommendation: Build engagement across modalities, using community-building structures such as cohort models, timely feedback systems, and interactive peer-to-peer environments. Track and act on student sentiment using real-time tools.

3. Invest in Faculty Development and Support Systems

Faculty readiness is critical, yet many institutions still lack coherent support structures for digital teaching. The most successful examples shared in the working group include multi-tiered faculty support ecosystems, peer mentoring, and access to instructional design. Core to faculty readiness and support is sustained faculty engagement—creating conditions where educators are motivated, involved, and supported in shaping and continuously improving digital learning practices.

Recommendation: Create formal and informal structures for ongoing faculty support, beyond initial onboarding. This includes digital pedagogy training, co-design opportunities with learning designers, and targeted guidance for incorporating new tools such as AI and multimedia.

4. Confront and Address Institutional Resistance

Many institutions continue to face cultural resistance to online learning, often tied to outdated assumptions about quality or prestige. Delegates emphasised the need to align digital strategy with institutional mission, and to actively communicate how online learning contributes to institutional objectives, inclusion, widening audience, increasing revenue, and workforce relevance.

Furthermore, assumptions about learner demand for online offerings should also be interrogated. Sustainable online strategies require a clear understanding of who these programmes serve and what specific learner needs they are designed to meet.

Recommendation: Engage faculty and institutional leaders with data and outcomes that demonstrate the continued relevance and strategic value of online learning. A sustainable digital strategy requires understanding which learner groups online programmes best serve, and aligning design and delivery accordingly. Reframe online education not as a compromise, but as a critical pathway to achieve long-term institutional goals.

5. Scale through Institutional Alignment, Not Standardisation

Many institutions struggle with fragmented digital learning efforts, where faculties operate in silos, incentives are misaligned, and support structures vary widely. A key insight from the working group was that coherence, not standardisation, is what enables effective scaling. Institutions don't need one-size-fits-all models, but they do need shared direction, consistent quality expectations, and cross-functional alignment.

Recommendation: Develop a shared institutional framework and vocabulary for online learning that defines core principles, quality standards, and strategic goals. Use this to align academic leaders, faculty, and operational teams, allowing diverse approaches to flourish within a coordinated structure.

These recommendations form a cohesive playbook for successful online learning, grounded in strategic alignment, intentional design, student engagement, faculty support, and institutional coherence. Implementing these recommendations is driven by a pragmatic approach to innovation: running pilots, gathering feedback, and openly documenting both successes and setbacks.

Embedding this experimental mindset at every stage creates the institutional momentum needed to overcome resistance, align technology with pedagogy, and ensure financial and operational sustainability. When internal champions pilot new approaches, share insights swiftly, and refine practices, the toolkit becomes a catalyst for transformation–grounded in practice, built from shared experience, and adaptable across diverse contexts.

Quick Self-Assessment and Action Plan

Take 10 minutes to reflect on your online programme design. Use this checklist to **spot gaps** and note **immediate actions.**

*Print it on A3 paper, place it on your wall, and keep it as a visible guide to drive progress.

☐ Tick if you have achieved it ⏩ Suggested immediate action

Pedagogy

Effective Online Course Design

- ☐ Design aligned with learning outcomes and progression
- ☐ Student engagement tracked and peer learning promoted
- ☐ Synchronous/asynchronous modes used intentionally
- ☐ Accessibility embedded in design

⏩ *Define and map outcomes to activities for a module.*

Digital Assessment & Integrity

- ☐ Assessments suited to digital context
- ☐ Clear policies on AI use and plagiarism
- ☐ Assessments demonstrate meaningful learning

⏩ *Replace one high-stakes quiz with an applied task.*

AI & Tech-Enhanced Learning

- ☐ AI/tech tools used with clear pedagogical purpose
- ☐ Responsible experimentation is guided and supported

⏩ *Share a quick one-page guideline on tool use.*

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

- ☐ Across-institution shared quality standards in place
- ☐ Student feedback collected and used
- ☐ Regular review and updates conducted

⏩ *Start a quick feedback loop and review cycle.*

Integrated Learning Ecosystems

- ☐ Content duplication minimised across departments
- ☐ External learning integration mechanisms in place

⏩ *Map existing content and integration points.*

Engagement

Student Readiness and Onboarding

- ☐ Student orientation tailored to experience levels in place

⏩ *Add a 20-minute cohort orientation in week 1*

Social Presence & Belonging

- ☐ Intentional peer interaction strategy in place

⏩ *Start a virtual peer study or co-working session*

Interaction & Participation

- ☐ Frequent interaction with instructors, peers, and content

⏩ *Map out instructor–student and peer interaction points.*

Feedback & Responsiveness

- ☐ Students receive timely, actionable feedback
- ☐ Student questions and concerns addressed promptly

⏩ *Host weekly live feedback and Q&A session.*

Engagement Monitoring & Alerts

- ☐ Engagement tracked over time with early alert in place
- ☐ Student data analysed and insights shared with faculty

⏩ *Configure engagement triggers and responses.*

Accessibility & Inclusion

- ☐ Accessibility ensured for disabilities and tech limitations

⏩ *Conduct a quick accessibility and inclusivity audit.*

Course & Programme Retention

- ☐ Course completion and programme persistence tracked
- ☐ Data analysed to improve learner success

⏩ *Review retention data and flag one improvement area.*

Support

Faculty Development & Training

- ☐ Structured onboarding in digital pedagogy provided
- ☐ Ongoing training in emerging tools (e.g., AI) available
- ☐ Educators actively engaged in shaping learning practices

⏩ *Organise a workshop with digital instructional designer.*

Workload, Incentives, and Intellectual Property

- ☐ Online teaching responsibilities reflected in workload
- ☐ Incentives on place and aligned with teaching excellence
- ☐ Transparent IP policies for ownership of online content

⏩ *Track design hours to recognise workload and effort.*

Instructional Design & Media Support

- ☐ Support available for course design and production
- ☐ Instructional design/media teams well integrated into curriculum development cycles

⏩ *Mandate design/media involvement in course planning.*

Peer Collaboration & Mentorship

- ☐ Communities of practice or peer feedback loops in place
- ☐ Early-career and new-to-online faculty supported

⏩ *Form a community of practice for online learning.*

Learning Platforms and Infrastructure

- ☐ LMS consistently used for teaching and communication
- ☐ Platform provides usable data for teaching decisions
- ☐ Instructors and students adequately onboarded
- ☐ Technical support in place for student and instructors

⏩ *Identify and resolve one key technical issue.*

Copyright and Contact Details

Suggested Citation: Digital Education Council, *The Online Course Excellence Toolkit*, 2025.

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