QM Emergency Remote Instruction Checklist

Higher Education

The [Quality Matters](#) *Emergency Remote Instruction (ERI) Checklist* is a tiered list of considerations, tips, and actionable strategies to enact during an institutional move to temporary remote instruction of classroom-based courses. It is presented in three phases, according to prioritized needs:

1. Start Here: Preparing for Success
2. Next Steps: Guiding Students and Their Learning
3. Longer Term Considerations: Teaching Effectively in a New Environment

The QM ERI Checklist is organized into three columns to first provide instructors with recommended actions, then add a brief explanation of the action's importance and impact, and finally, a column to reference related Specific Review Standards from the [QM Higher Education Rubric™, Sixth Edition](#).
This checklist can be:

- Used by individual faculty as a prioritized checklist for remote teaching
- Distributed by an institution, potentially along with additional information and guidance, for internal usage during temporary periods of remote instruction
- Used as guidance for instructional designers and/or educational technologists who are working with faculty in a rapid development process to temporarily move classroom instruction online

START HERE: Preparing for Success

The Goal: Set students up for success by quickly preparing the environment before students begin work, and orienting them to their new "classroom" – this may include collecting links for technology help, setting communication policies, drafting an explanation of what's different, linking to synchronous meeting tools, and revising the schedule. Address the biggest questions students might have, and help allay any immediate concerns in moving to remote instruction.

HINT: *Reach out to your local support services. They may have shortcuts for you, such as an LMS template or institutional web pages that explain shifts in policies, how to access support services remotely, etc.*

Recommended Actions for Instructors: *(Check box when completed)*	WHY?	Connection to QM Higher Ed. Course Design Rubric:
• **Provide explicit directions and comparisons of the structure of the online version with the F2F version, clearly identifying where students can find course components and what they should do to get started.** **Priority Tip:** *Explain how the remote class will be structured, if students need to log on for synchronous sessions (and how), where they can find assignment information, and how they should submit assignments.*	**Quickly transitioning a course from F2F delivery to an online format is likely to modify the structure of a course in ways that students might find foreign or confusing. This is especially true for students new to online, the LMS, or new to the format being used.**	**HE SRS 1.1** instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various components. **HE SRS 1.2** Learners are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course.

• **Address communication and interaction expectations.** **Priority Tip:** *Explain to students how they should contact you (email, via online office hours, through the LMS, etc.), how often they should log in to the class site, which activities are synchronous vs. asynchronous, and any guidelines for communicating with peers (e.g., professional communication, "Netiquette", etc.).*	**Students may not readily translate classroom communication expectations to the online format. Setting these expectations from the start and modeling expectations in all communication, will help students engage in the online format more quickly and confidently. Since it often isn't obvious to students how to replicate their in-class interactions in the online environment, explain how they should interact with you, the course, and their peers.**	**HE SRS 1.3** **|** Communication expectations for online discussions, email, and other forms of interaction are clearly stated. **HE SRS 5.4 |** The requirements for learner interaction are clearly stated.
• **Tell learners what to expect from you and when to expect it.** **Priority Tip:** *Tell students when they will receive an answer to an emailed question (e.g., 24 hours, 48 hours, etc.) and when they can expect assignment grades and feedback.*	**In F2F courses, you meet with students every week -- same day and time. It can minimize the disruption for students if you bring this rhythmic structure online by telling students when they will receive a reply to a question, and when they will receive assignment feedback and grades. Sharing with students what they can expect from you might also make them feel at ease in a time of transition and uncertainty.**	**HE SRS 5.3 |** The instructor's plan for interacting with learners during the course is clearly stated.
• **Provide instructions on how learners can access their grades.** **Priority Tip:** *Explain to students how they will receive grades, how to view grades online, etc. Depending on how long you will be remote teaching, you may want to set up an online gradebook so that students can determine their current course grade as well.*	**Students may not be used to checking their grades via the LMS. Ensure students know how to view their grades -- both their course grade and individual assignment grades.**	**HE SRS 3.2 |** The course grading policy is stated clearly at the beginning of the course.

• **Directly identify any relevant changes to any course and institutional policies.** **Priority Tip:** *Let students know immediately if there are changes to due dates/times for assignments.*	**Students will need to be alerted to any changes in course or institutional policies or schedules caused by the rapid move from F2f to online, or by the underlying crisis that precipitated such a move. Examples might include amended policies for students who lack a stable internet connection, appropriate technology, or who fall ill.**	**HE SRS 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.
• **Identify where you and your students can receive prompt support for technology used in the course and inform students in advance about what technologies they will need to acquire and/or use, and how to find support.** **Priority Tip:** *List the technology help contact information for your institution, as well as a brief description of the help that is offered. Include links for software students might need to download, such as web conferencing software, as well as links to student tutorials for using the technology.*	**Students and their instructors may be challenged by technology requirements necessitated by a sudden move to online delivery. Students will need to be alerted to the technology required and will need assistance with accessing and using remote technologies. Consider options for students who are not equipped with the necessary technology for remote instruction.**	**HE SRS 1.5** Minimum technology requirements for the course are clearly stated, and information on how to obtain the technologies is provided. **HE SRS 1.6|** Computer skills and digital information literacy skills expected of the learner are clearly stated. **HE SRS 7.1 |** The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to obtain it.

• **Articulate quick and easy ways for learners to find appropriate academic or student services support offices and resources.** **Priority Tip:** *Provide information about support offices and resources that might've altered services due to the shift to remote teaching. For example, check with your Library to see if they have information for how to access resources from off-campus, and ask tutoring centers if they'll be continuing tutoring via synchronous web sessions.*	**Students faced with a changed learning environment may be unprepared for online study and uncertain about how to get assistance. Ensure that students have quick and easy access to contact information for technology help, academic support, and student support offices and resources.**	**HE SRS 7.3 |** Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's academic support services and resources that can help learners succeed in the course. **HE SRS 7.4 |** Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's student services and resources that can help learners succeed.
• **Explain to students how to access the institution's accessibility services and be responsive to learners who need assistance in accessing digital course materials.** **Priority Tip:** *Provide the contact information for your institutional office for accessibility and direct students to reach out early and proactively if they think they might need an accommodation.*	**The online environment may be especially difficult for students who need learning accommodations. Connect with your institutional office for student accessibility services so you can easily direct students to their services.**	**HE SRS 7.2 |** Course Instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility policies and services.

NEXT STEPS: Guiding Students and Their Learning
The Goal: Continue to ease the transition and build confidence by helping students to establish social presence online, providing guidance and explanation similar to what you'd say in class, and considering best practices for remote teaching with technology.

Recommended Actions for Instructors: *(Check box when completed)*	**WHY?**	**Connection to QM Higher Ed. Course Design Rubric:**

• **Create a sense of community by encouraging and guiding learners to introduce themselves in the online classroom/platform and/or engage in online discussions.** **Tip:** *An early "introduction discussion" activity gets students using the LMS discussion tool, which they may need for upcoming assignments. If the class has already begun, however, students may have already done an in-class introduction. In this case, consider a different angle for a "get to know you" discussion post, such as describing where they're logging in from. Activities such as these may seem unimportant, but they can be vital in helping students feel connected to you and their peers in ways that build rapport and camaraderie.*	**Students who have not taken facilitated online courses may be unaware of the need to establish their own social presence and connect with others digitally. This may be very important when the move to online is sudden or unplanned. Synchronous discussions can be held via institutionally-supported technology, such as web conferencing tools, or asynchronous discussions and collaborations can be done through the discussion tool, wikis, Google docs, or software such as Voice Thread.**	**HE SRS 1.9 |** Learners are asked to introduce themselves to the class. **HE SRS 5.2 |** Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support learning.
• **Explain to your students how the learning materials help them complete courses activities and achieve the course learning objectives.** **Tip**: *Reflect on how you begin your F2F class sessions, and use that to create a module/unit introduction that is text-based or a short video that you record. You can post this as an Announcement or send via email. In this Module Introduction, explain to students how what they're reading or watching that week connects to the course learning objectives.*	**In class, students rely on your introductions and contextualization of instructional materials, and the same is true online. A short explanation of what material they'll be interacting with that week, any particular areas of importance, and how they'll use the material to do well on the aligned assessments will improve their ability to engage with the material.**	**HE SRS 4.1 |** The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies. **HE SRS 4.2 |** The relationship between the use of instructional materials in the course and completing learning activities is clearly explained.

• **Specifically explain how each activity or assignment is related to the course objectives and how you will evaluate submitted work.** **Tip:** *Just as you would in class, introduce an assignment by going over the instructions using text, audio, or video, providing relevant examples when useful/possible, and reminding students how the assignment is connected to learning objectives/outcomes. Include clear information, whether through an assignment prompt, rubric, or other means, about how the assignment will be graded.*	**In F2F classes, instructors often provide additional information about upcoming assignments. Students will benefit from clear and detailed information about what to do, how you will evaluate it, and why.**	**HE SRS 2.4 |** The relationship between learning objectives or competencies and learning activities is clearly stated. **HE SRS 3.1 |** The assessments measure the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies. **HE SRS 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. **HE SRS 5.1 |** The learning activities promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies.
• **Provide learners with timely feedback to enable them to track their learning progress.** **Tip:** *When teaching remotely, it's important to include acknowledgement feedback as well – let students know, for example, that their assignments have been received. Additionally, provide informative feedback in a timely manner, so that students can use it to improve future coursework. If possible, consider including "knowledge check" types of activities via creating low-stakes, simple quizzes or simplified online discussions that reflect the activities you'd already planned for in-class work.*	**Students may feel disoriented without regular classroom interaction. In the online environment, much of your interaction with learners can be through robust and timely feedback. Additionally, when teaching at a distance, it is crucial to provide lower-stakes, formative assessments so both you and your students can proactively address any confusion before higher-stakes assessments. The use of smaller, formative assessments, like quizzes or discussions, can replace some of the planned in-class interaction, and can also give you timely insights into how students are learning.**	**HE 3.5 SRS |** The course provides learners with multiple opportunities to track their learning progress with timely feedback.

LONGER TERM CONSIDERATIONS: Teaching Effectively in a New Environment
The Goal: Develop additional components of the remote course to enhance the learning experience. If you feel you might be teaching remotely longer than anticipated, begin to acclimate students to the "new normal" by designing learning units within the institutional LMS and/ or creating online-specific materials or assignments.

Recommended Actions for Instructors: *(Check box when completed)*	WHY?	Connection to QM Higher Ed. Course Design Rubric:
• **Consider using short multimedia pieces for interaction, and make sure students have easy access to any software, plugs-ins, etc. they'll need to access the multimedia content.** **Tip**: *If you're comfortable, explore using video as a way to connect with your F2F students, by posting short webcam announcements, recording shorter online lectures, or giving students screencasted feedback for assignments. Whether it's existing video material or a new recording you create, however, refrain from sharing videos longer than 10 minutes. Instead, consider breaking these up into shorter chunks.*	**Multimedia can be used both for content and feedback (e.g., screencasted feedback, synchronous web feedback, etc.). Consider that students may have *limited internet connectivity*, and keep videos short, audio clear, etc.**	**HE SRS 8.5 |** Course multimedia facilitate ease of use. **HE SRS 1.5** Minimum technology requirements for the course are clearly stated, and information on how to obtain the technologies is provided.

• **Organize your course online to guide students along the learning path and help them progressively navigate through the course each week.** **Tip:** *Focus on organizing weekly modules/learning units into folders that contain the materials and assignment information students will need for that week. If possible, also add explication and context by including a module introduction and/or summary, information on how materials and assignments are connected to learning objectives, and assignments prompts and/or rubrics.*	**Unclear navigation and disorganized materials present a significant barrier for all students. Creating an effective learning path in the LMS will reduce frustration for everyone and encourage students to be more self-sufficient. Consider organizing material by learning units/modules, and keep frequently-referenced items, such as the Syllabus and Course Schedule, in a separate folder, or linked in the left-hand navigation. Connect with the appropriate office at your institution to see if an LMS template exists for organization.**	**HE SRS 8.1 |** Course navigation facilitates ease of use.
• **Plan active learning opportunities and use course tools to meaningfully facilitate learners' interaction and active learning.** **Tip:** *Consider how students will continue to interact with one another, you, and course material by engaging collaborative tools (e.g., Google docs, Wikis, Voice Thread), synchronous tools (e.g., Zoom, WebEx, Collaborate, Skype), and tools for asynchronous, online interaction (e.g., discussions, blogs, journals).*	**Active learning and engagement are facilitated by the interactions your students have with you, the content, and each other. Keep the active learning of your classroom-based course going by bringing discussion and collaboration online.**	**HE SRS 5.2 |** Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning. **HE SRS 6.2 |** Course tools promote learner engagement and active learning.

• **Provide learners with information on protecting their data and privacy for tools introduced or recommended throughout the course.** **Tip:** *As the easiest approach, keep all course work inside your institutional LMS. For anything outside of that where students will have to create an account, submit material, etc., ensure that FERPA and other institutional policies regarding student privacy are being followed.*	**Students may not be mindful of protecting their own data and may assume the institution has protections in place for online engagement. Check on any related institutional policies regarding sharing data and privacy.**	**HE SRS 6.4 |** The course provides learners with information on protecting their data and privacy.
• **Provide appropriate citations and permissions for the materials you use in your course.** **Tip:** *Focus on material and images that are Creative Commons licensed and learn more about Fair Use and other copyright laws by connecting with your institutional librarians. Share your sources of information to help students better understand proper attribution and how to avoid plagiarism.*	**Students will look to the way you use and acknowledge materials as an example. Materials you are putting online must demonstrate the academic integrity expectations you have of students through proper citations, references and use permissions. Especially in a time sensitive move to online, finding openly licensed material might be a solution.**	**HE SRS 4.3 |** The course models the academic integrity expected of learners by providing both source references and permissions for use of instructional materials.