Quality in Focus

Engaging with the National Standards for Quality Online Programs and Readiness Tool

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NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR QUALITY

NSQ

dlac QM VLLA

NSQOL.ORG

Overview

- Brief history of National Standards for Quality Online Learning (NSQOL
- Overview of 2025 Refreshed NSQ Online Programs
- New Accreditation or Certification aligned with NSQ Online Programs
  - Readiness Tool

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 oversee the standards:

- DLAC

- Quality Matters (QM)

- Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance (VLLA)

NSQ Leadership Team

- Leaders from a variety of Online Learning programs and organizations

- Provide guidance and input from the field

- In 2023, following the pandemic, recommended a formal review of the standards in 2023.

Review Process

**Formal review of all three standard sets: *Refresh* or *Revision***

- A **refresh** is a update that clarifies language, corrects errors, and expands explanations or examples while preserving the original intent and meaning of the indicators.
- A **revision** is a more comprehensive process that incorporates advancements in the field, potentially modifying the structure, meaning, or intent of the indicators.

Process

- Review of research: An Annotated Bibliography was commissioned.
- Chairs for each standard set were identified
- Surveys were disseminated to gather input from NSQOL users
- Focus groups were organized to hear from the field
- A recommendation to Refresh or Revise each set was taken to the LT
- Committee work started
  - Review of the standards and indicators with recommendations provided
  - Committees included both practitioners and researchers
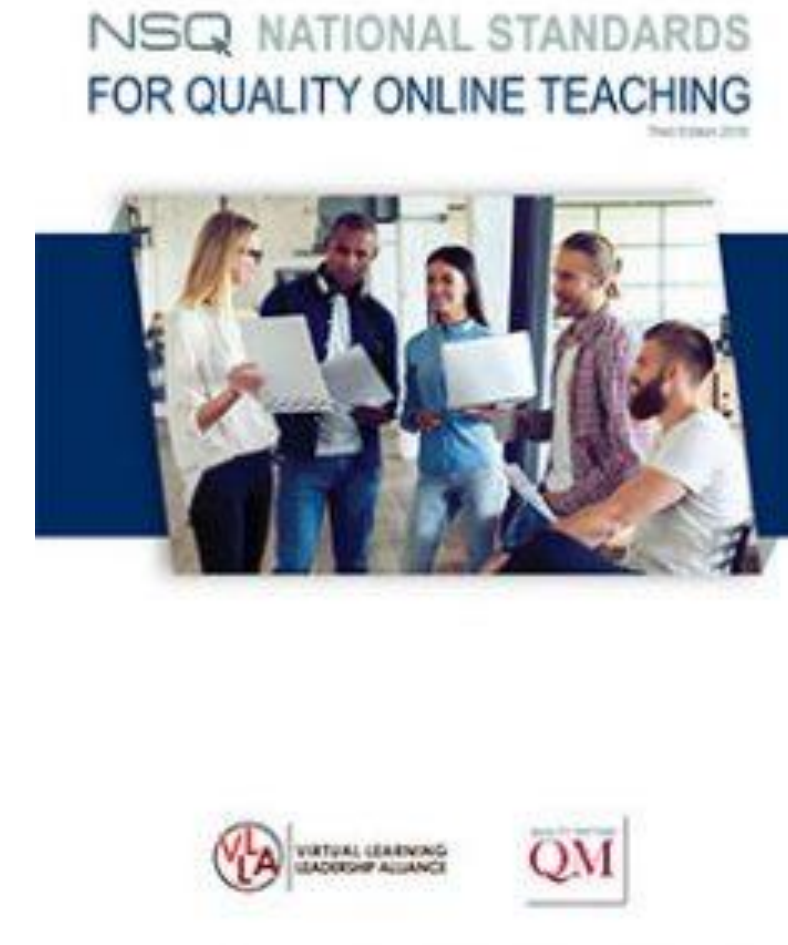
Review decision for each standard set: 2019 to 2025
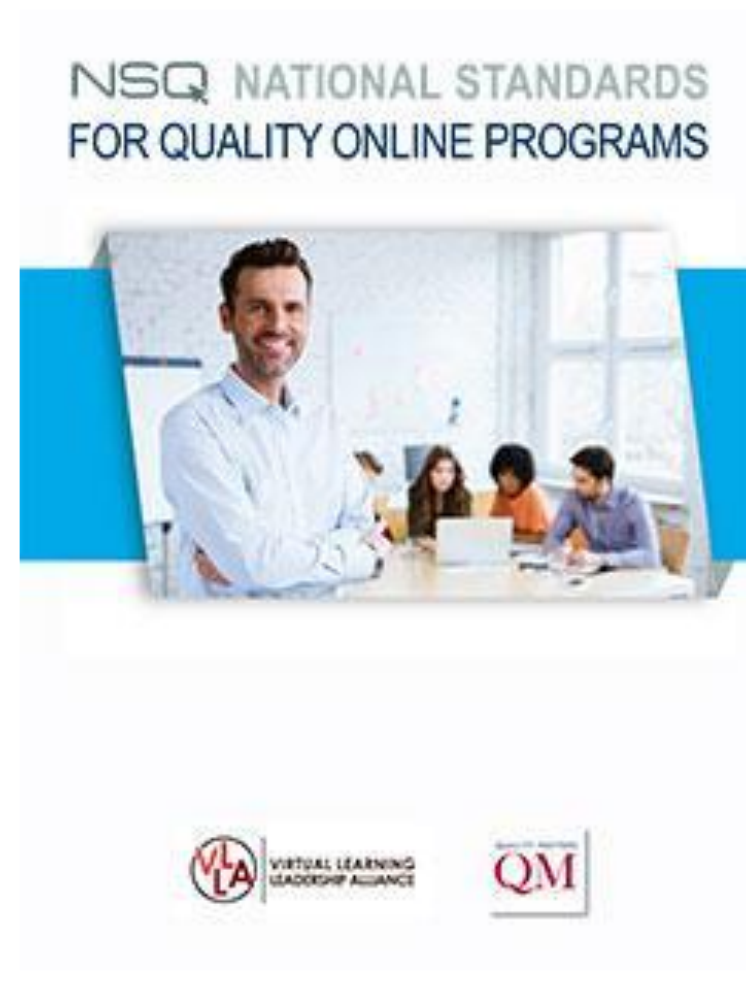
Refresh

Refresh

Revision

The Standards

Below are links to **view or download** the most current versions of each of the standards sets.


National Standards for Online Courses

National Standards for Online Teaching

National Standards for Online Programs

The following documents offer guidance for aligning the 2019 editions with the 2025 editions.

Overview of Changes to Online Courses   Overview of Changes to Online Teaching   Overview of Changes to Online Programs

NSQ Online Programs: 2019 to 2025

NSQ NATIONAL STANDARDS
FOR QUALITY ONLINE PROGRAMS

Multi-year project
- Literature review
- Focus groups
- Workgroup sessions

Significant Updates to Program Standards
- Consolidation and realignment standards and indicators
- Updated Standard H: Program Evaluation
- Expanded Standard L: Equity and Access
- Expanded and enhanced Explanations and Examples throughout the document

2019 to 2025 Change Document

Organized into Four Clusters

Mission, Governance, and Leadership

- Clear mission statement and governance structure.
- Defined roles for program leadership and accountability.

Planning, Resources, and Evaluation

- Regular strategic planning and budget alignment.
- Continuous program evaluation to ensure improvement.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Quality course design and instructional methods.
- Use of valid assessments to measure learner performance.

Access and Stakeholder Support

- Equity, learner and parent support, and professional development.

NSQ NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR QUALITY ONLINE PROGRAMS

VLLA — VIRTUAL LEARNING LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE | QM QUALITY MATTERS | dlac THE COMMUNITY ADVANCING DIGITAL LEARNING

MISSION, GOVERNANCE, AND LEADERSHIP

Standard A: Mission Statement

Standard B: Governance

Standard C: Program Leadership

Standard D: Transparency and Accountability

PLANNING, RESOURCES, AND EVALUATION

Standard E: Planning

Standard F: Program Staff

Standard G: Financial and Material Resources

Standard H: Program Evaluation

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

Standard I: Curriculum and Course Design

Standard J: Instruction

Standard K: Assessment and Learner Performance

ACCESS AND STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

Standard L: Equity and Access

Standard M: Instructional Staff Support

Standard N: Learner and Parent/Guardian Support

Standards, Indicators, Explanation and Examples

STANDARD A: MISSION STATEMENT

A mission statement of a quality program clearly conveys its purpose and goals. It serves as the basis for the program's day-to-day operations, as well as a guide for its strategic plans for the future. Communication between, and buy-in from, stakeholders are a critical component of a mission statement.

A1 The mission statement clearly and concisely conveys the program purpose and educational focus to the target audience.

EXPLANATION

A clear mission statement that includes organizational purpose is essential in providing direction for individuals to follow as they serve their intended audience. The focus of the mission statement should be on learning, not the method of delivery.

EXAMPLES

A clear and concise mission statement aligns the focus of individuals within the program, so all members of the organization are working towards the same short- and long-term goals. A clearly stated mission articulates what the program is, who it serves, and what it hopes to accomplish, enabling others to understand the purpose of the program or organization. Regardless of modality, all programs should emphasize learning rather than delivery format in their mission statements.

Depending on program structure, the mission might be defined by a governing organization or school district. In this case, the program should have a voice in establishing the mission, and the goals of the program should align with the mission of the parent organization.

www.nsqol.org

AccredVEd
Powered by the Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance

AccredVEd is an accreditation and certification service specifically designed for K-12 virtual learning programs.

- Program of the Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance (VLLA).

- Provides rigorous, research-based evaluation to ensure virtual schools and programs meet high standards of quality.

- Program aligns with the NSQOP.

- Structured evaluations conducted by experienced virtual program practitioners.

VIRTUAL LEARNING LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE

The Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance is an association of supplemental virtual programs from across the United States. Consisting largely of state virtual schools, and several outstanding consortia, the member organizations:

- serve over a million virtual course enrollments annually,
- provide their districts and students with over 5,000 active, highly qualified teachers trained in virtual instruction,
- supply digital learning services to their constituents,
- offer professional learning opportunities aligned to the National Standards for Quality Online Learning, and
- conduct research related to the field of virtual learning.

The Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance (VLLA) is a 501c3 educational nonprofit organization. VLLA's mission, **to strengthen online learning through leadership, advocacy, expertise, and professional relationships, is the focus of the organization's strategic plan.**
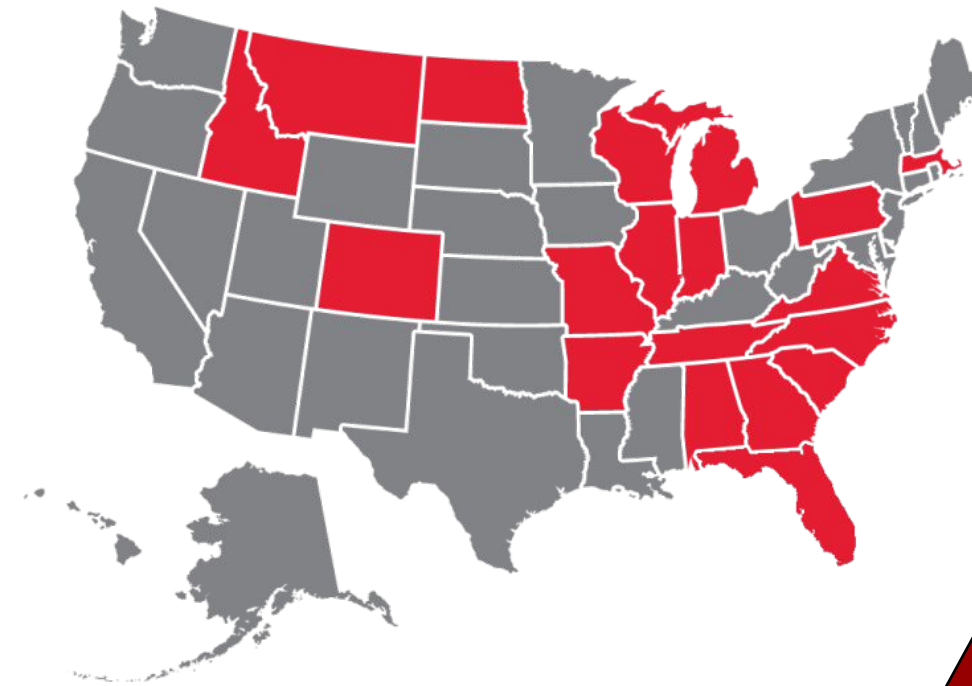
The AccredVEd Advantage

Nationally Recognized Standards

Accreditation is based on the recognized National Standards for Quality Online Programs (NSQOP).

Two Recognition Pathways

AccredVEd offers accreditation as well as four certifications based on the 4 clusters of the NSQOP

Pathway to Dual Accreditation

Accreditation programs may earn synchronized accreditation with Cognia. Agreements with other recognized accrediting bodies are being established.

Key Focus Areas Aligned with NSQ

01 **Mission, Governance, and Leadership**

Strong leadership and strategic vision.

02 **Planning, Resources, and Evaluation**

Data-driven decision-making and sustainability.

03 **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**

High-quality instructional practices.

04 **Access and Stakeholder Support**

Equity, accessibility, and learner success.

Readiness Tool

Scan me

bit.ly/AccredVEd-readiness

Quality in Focus

Thank you for participating

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