

# Online Program Development Playbook



University of Kentucky

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## Introduction

Approaches for developing new programs vary but implementing and/or considering these best practices can help ensure the success of the program as well as students. Campus resources, including web resources and campus contacts, are provided below each section to get you started.

## Needs Assessment, Market Research, & Program Feasibility

1. Identify the target audience and their learning needs, preferences, and goals.
2. Conduct market research to understand the demand.
3. Identify competition and unique selling points for the proposed program.

### Campus Resource

- Contact [OSPIE](#) for assistance with market and program demand analyses or for recommendations on external resources if you prefer to do your own analyses.

## Budget and Resource Allocation

1. Budget considerations include personnel cost, equipment, course materials, curriculum development, marketing, operational cost, potential revenue, etc.
2. Determine whether an established tuition or differential tuition is most feasible for the online program.
3. Develop a realistic budget plan and allocate resources appropriately to support the development, implementation, and maintenance of the online program.

### Campus Resource

- Consult with your college dean, budget officer, and the Provost Budget Office to create a realistic budget plan.
- After submitting the early alert for the program approval, complete the program proforma (upon request from the Provost's Office) to document these plans for approval by the appropriate reviewers.

## Clear Program Learning Objectives

1. Define clear and measurable learning outcomes for the program.
2. Align these outcomes with the needs of the target audience and industry standards.

### Campus Resource

- [Schedule a consultation](#) with UK Online instructional designers to get help.
- See [CELT](#) or [OSPIE](#) for additional help.

## Curriculum Design

1. Utilize instructional designers to maximize curriculum design and learning outcomes.
2. Develop a comprehensive curriculum that aligns with the defined program objectives.
3. Organize the curriculum into logical courses, modules, and learning outcomes ensuring a structured learning path.
4. Incorporate a variety of instructional materials (e.g., videos, readings, interactive content) to enhance engagement.
5. Design the program in a way that allows for easy updates, adaptations, and scalability to accommodate changing needs and a growing number of learners.

### Campus Resource

- See the UK Online [Course Design Fundamentals](#) page or [schedule a consultation](#) to get help with curriculum design.
- See the Faculty Media Depot section on the [UK Online Faculty Resource](#) site or [schedule a consultation](#) to get help with media support.
- See [Distance Learning Library Services](#) to discuss best use of library resources.

## Technology Integration

1. Utilize a learning management system (LMS) to support the program's objectives and facilitate easy access to course materials and assessments.
2. Leverage educational technologies, simulations, and tools that enhance the learning experience.

### Campus Resource

- See the UK Online Course Tools section on the [UK Online Faculty Resource](#) site or [schedule a consultation](#) to get help.

## Quality Assurance

1. Establish clear quality assurance standards and benchmarks for the online program, ensuring alignment with institutional goals and industry standards.
2. Work with an instructional designer to ensure alignment of quality assurance standards across the program and curriculum.
3. If courses currently exist, conduct a pilot test of the online modality by seeking approval to offer some courses online to identify potential issues and gather feedback.
4. Use feedback from the pilot test to make necessary improvements and enhance the program's quality.

### Campus Resource

- See the UK Online [Quality Assurance](#) page or [schedule a consultation](#) to get help.

## Engagement Strategies

1. Integrate interactive elements such as discussions, multimedia, and collaborative projects to keep students engaged.
2. Implement a variety of assessment methods and provide timely, constructive feedback to help learners track their progress and improve their performance.
3. Foster a sense of community and interaction among students through discussion forums, virtual meetings, and group activities.
4. Incorporate regular and substantive interaction in all courses.

### Campus Resource

- See the asynchronous [Regular & Substantive Interaction and Academic Engagement](#) training, or [schedule a consultation](#) to get help.

## Accessibility and Inclusivity

1. Ensure that the program and its materials are accessible to all learners, including those with disabilities.
2. Comply with relevant accessibility standards and guidelines.

### Campus Resource

- See the [UK Digital Accessibility](#) page.
- See the UK Online [Accessibility](#) page for technical resources or [schedule a consultation](#) to get help.

## Faculty Development

1. Equip faculty with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively engage with students in an online environment.
2. Provide training and professional development opportunities to prepare faculty for online teaching, focusing on effective pedagogy, technology usage, and online student engagement.
3. Provide continuous support and mentoring to faculty throughout the program delivery.
4. Encourage collaboration and sharing of best practices among faculty.

### Campus Resource

- See the information on our [UK Online Faculty Resource](#) site, view the UK Online [Training & Events](#) section, or [schedule a consultation](#) to get help or request a workshop.
- See [CELT](#) for additional help.

## Compliance and Accreditation

1. Ensure that the online program meets regulatory and accreditation requirements to maintain credibility and quality.
2. Stay informed about relevant legal and compliance changes affecting online education.

### Campus Resource

- See the UK Online Compliance section on the [UK Online Faculty Resource](#) site or [schedule a consultation](#) to get help.
- See [OSPIE](#) for help with programmatic accreditation.

## Marketing and Enrollment

1. Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to promote the online program and attract the target audience.
2. Utilize various marketing channels, including social media, email campaigns, and partnerships, to reach prospective students.
3. Host informational sessions, webinars, and virtual open houses to showcase the program and address queries from potential students.
4. Leverage alumni and student ambassadors to share their experiences and advocate for the program.

### Campus Resource

- See the UK Online Student Engagement section on the [UK Online Faculty Resource](#) site or [schedule a consultation](#) to get help.

## Student Support Services

1. Create a comprehensive program-level orientation to familiarize students with program expectations, modalities, and resources.
2. Offer academic advising, counseling, and technical support to students throughout the program to enhance student success and retention.
3. Establish clear communication channels for students to reach out for assistance and guidance.

### Campus Resource

- See the UK Online [Student Experience](#) page or [schedule a consultation](#) to get help.
- See the Students section on the [UK Online](#) recruiting site for related information or find more resources on the [Student Success](#) page.

## Continuous Improvement

1. Regularly review and analyze program data, including student performance, feedback, and completion rates, to identify areas of improvement and ensure continued alignment with institutional goals and industry standards.
2. Schedule regular quality assurance course reviews to identify areas of improvement and ensure continued alignment with program standards.
3. Iterate and update the program based on emerging trends, feedback, and technological advancements to ensure its relevance and excellence.

### Campus Resource

- See [OSPIE](#) for assistance with program assessment.
- See the UK Online [Quality Assurance](#) page or [schedule a consultation](#) to get help.

## Program Approvals

1. Before progressing, consider the information provided above, and discuss ideas for new programs with college leadership, your budget officer, the department chair, and faculty to ensure support.
2. See the [Curriculum Proposals](#) section on the Office of the Provost site for information about syllabus requirements, requirements for curriculum proposals, and the workflow for program approvals.
3. The general workflow for new program approvals is:
  - a. Submit the Early Alert Form
  - b. Complete the Program Proforma (upon request from the Provost's Office).
  - c. Prepare the relevant files for your proposal.
  - d. Complete the proposal form and upload relevant files to [Curriculum](#); this will trigger the formal review process.
  - e. Monitor your approval and respond to questions from reviewers in a timely manner to minimize the approval timeline.
4. Once the new program proposal receives final approval, the following administrative steps must be completed in sequential order:
  - a. Registrar notification
  - b. Create new program SAP code (IRADS)
  - c. Create Admissions Application (UGR/GRD Admissions)
  - d. Publish new program webpage, RFI, and lead report (UK Online/UK PRM)