

Markers of success: a benchmarking exercise for IVIDENT (International Virtual Dental School)

Cardell R¹, Bayne S², Camilleri S³, Cornforth J⁴, de Vries J⁵, Ferroni P⁶, Hatzipanagos S¹, Hensten A⁷, Oliver R⁸, Paganelli C⁹, Reynolds PA¹, Sanz M¹⁰, Stagnell S¹, Tonni, I⁹, and Wilson, NHF¹

¹Dental Institute, King's College London, England; ²School of Dentistry, University of Michigan, USA; ³Department of Dental Surgery, University of Malta School of Dentistry; ⁴Tier2 Consulting, UK; ⁵University of Adelaide, Australia; School of Public Health, ⁶Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Australia; ⁷Institute of Clinical Dentistry, University of Tromsø, Norway; ⁸School of Dentistry, Cardiff University, Wales; ⁹School of Dentistry, University of Brescia, Italy; ¹⁰Faculty of Dentistry, University of Complutense, Madrid, Spain

Aims

To benchmark the IVIDENT project against the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE, 2009)¹ seven strategic priorities for supporting higher education institutions in the development and embedding of technology enhanced learning (TEL).

Materials and methods

A UK-funded project, IVIDENT is a holistic, online, international solution for dental educators and their students. This poster demonstrates how IVIDENT has drawn on UK national parameters to develop benchmarking as a powerful tool in its assurance and enhancement agenda to:

- provide evidence of the extent to which it addresses quality priorities and standards;
- improve the learner experience;
- enhance marketability;
- identify areas where it may improve delivery;
- re-prioritise sustainability options;
- inform research and institutional policies on augmenting TEL.

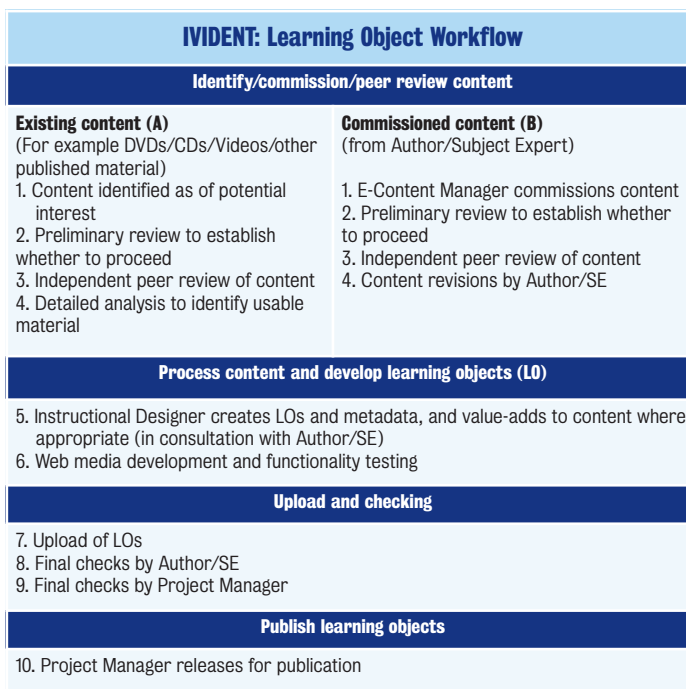
A roundtable structure at the Anglo-Italian Colloquium 2009 was used to brainstorm ideas and to generate responses in this benchmarking exercise. There were 15 contributors (authors) from eight countries who discussed to what extent IVIDENT matched up to the seven HEFCE strategic priorities in relation to: pedagogy, curriculum design and development; learning resources and environments; lifelong learning, processes and practices; strategic management, human resources and capacity development; quality; research and evaluation; infrastructure and technical standards.

Results

Using the HEFCE parameters, IVIDENT demonstrated its capacity to:

- enhance institutional connectivity across provision;
- extend teaching and pedagogical capacity, research and delivery;
- offer greater choice and effective adaptation of learning materials;
- enhance learning through the transformative process of technology;
- capture employer, student, tutor and other feedback to improve greater employability;
- enhance life-long learning through CPD, employer involvement and student e-profiling;
- and achieve green computing through virtualisation.

Institutional and faculty buy-in at the strategic and delivery level was reinforced as a continuing priority.



Conclusions

The development of IVIDENT as a quality assured product of the highest standard is central to the project. Procedures for assuring academic, educational and technical standards are being established and include the provision of clear acceptance criteria, peer review arrangements, and procedures for regular review and maintenance of learning resources.

The strategic priorities for TEL proposed by the HEFCE framework document have provided a sound basis for benchmarking IVIDENT's progress against national parameters.

IVIDENT is succeeding in all seven HEFCE strategic priority areas. IVIDENT will continue benchmarking to support the completion of the project in 2010.



The international perspective of the members of the roundtable group added an invaluable dimension to the IVIDENT benchmarking process, and the points identified through this exercise will be taken forward during 2010

