



# **Distance, Online and Blended Learning Guidance for Centres**

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## 1.0 Introduction

The key role of OTHM is to secure standards for those qualifications we certificate. As part of our commitment to quality assuring standards we aim to provide guidance and support to help Centres and their learners to achieve learning and development goals. We also ensure that any regulatory requirements are met, and in turn we support Centres to meet those requirements.

## 2.0 What is distance, online and blended learning?

**Distance learning** is a mode of delivering tuition to learners who are not physically present in a traditional setting such as a classroom. Learners are studying independently using a virtual learning environment for example online packages, posted resources and telephone support. When using distance learning, students work online at home while the teacher assigns work and checks in digitally. **Distance learning** includes no in-person interaction **between** teachers and students.

**Online learning** can be used as a **blended learning** technique to ensure in-person interaction **between** teachers and students on a regular basis.

With online learning (sometimes called e-learning), students can also be together in the classroom with an instructor while working through their digital lessons and assessments.

## 3.0 Who can deliver OTHM qualifications via distance, online and blended learning?

If you are a fully approved OTHM centre, can demonstrate that your quality systems support this mode of study and ensure our approval requirements are met then you can gain permission to deliver via blended/online/distance learning.

When you apply for centre approval, you should check the blended/distance learning option under 'mode of delivery'.

## 4.0 How can I plan for distance, online and blended learning?

Distance, online and blended learning present their own challenges. In order to ensure successful delivery of a programme you must plan well and consider;

- individual learner situations and requirements for flexible delivery e.g. learners in geographically isolated locations
- creating appropriate learning and assessment materials
- drawing up individual learning and assessment plans
- specifying the time allowed to cover the programme content
- defining rules which apply to extension of timescales indicated
- defining the provision of any e-learning which is available

- defining the resources and/or equipment available to the learner
- defining the amount of technical support, you would need
- how you will provide learning support to learners
- how you will monitor learner engagement and progress

## 5.0 What are the OTHM requirements?

This section outlines the minimum requirements that we expect must be met by approved centres when assessing OTHM qualifications through distance means. It can also work as your **own checklist** ensuring that all systems are in place and you can confidently apply to deliver.

Quality Category	Criteria	Rationale	Your evidence can be seen in	
Centre Governance	<p>An <b>appropriate governance structure</b> to guide and enable effective planning, decision making and continuous improvement relating to blended and distance learning programmes is in place.</p> <p>The blended and distance learning programmes are fully integrated into the centre's policies, processes, and structures</p>	<p>It is important that your centre Senior Management team decides on, plans, implements and reviews distance learning courses.</p> <p>It is important that the programmes you offer by distance learning come with sufficient course handbooks/syllabi where Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance processes are clearly explained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance Meeting minutes</li> <li>• Course review documents</li>   <li>• Course handbook</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology Support	<p><b>A technology strategy and plan</b> including electronic security measures is in place to ensure established standards and regulatory requirements are met.</p> <p><b>A contingency plan</b> is in place to ensure continuity of data regarding centre operation, student access and support services in the event of prolonged service disruption.</p>	<p>You must ensure that you have sufficient IT support for your online platforms as well as employing teaching staff with expertise that can effectively use the technologies.</p> <p>Also, ensure that records are securely kept by way of password protection, encryption etc.</p> <p>It is important to have back-up facilities in the event of system failure and archives of individual learner evidence on appropriate media e.g. CD ROM, memory sticks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of back-up facilities in the event of system failure</li> <li>• A contingency plan</li> <li>• Internal or outsourced IT support</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Support	The centre staff receive training, assistance, and support before teaching on blended and distance learning programmes as well as ongoing training and professional development related to improving practice in distance learning.	You must ensure that you provide teachers with clear induction on the use of the online platform as well as provide training and support materials related to fair use, plagiarism, and legal and ethical concepts relevant to copyright and use of digital and web-based resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Training materials / Staff handbook</li> <li>• Staff induction and training day agendas</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learner Support	Learners are well supported and kept informed in developing the required knowledge and skills to effectively use technologies.	<p>It is important that before starting on a course, a learner is assessed to ensure that they understand the mode of delivery and have the necessary technology. You must also ensure that you provide the required course materials and learning resources (digital or print format) before the course start date.</p> <p>During their study learners must have information and training in <b>how to access required materials</b> through electronic databases, digital material repositories, Learning Management System (LMS) and other sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-enrolment assessments of learners</li> <li>• Interviews for suitability</li> <li>• English language testing</li> <li>• Course syllabus</li>   <li>• Online or on-site technology support available</li> <li>• Online course materials</li> <li>• Online or print resources available</li> <li>• Syllabus clearly outlines learner-tutor contact times</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Course Design	<b>A course development process</b> is followed that ensures courses are effectively designed for distance delivery and learners can develop the necessary knowledge and skills to meet measurable learning outcomes at the course and programme level.	<p>It is important that you have a process in place for the development of courses delivered by distance means. Such process must be consistent with the assessment criteria and learning outcomes of the qualification specification.</p> <p>It is important to ensure that the materials and resources you develop are accessible to all learners (including learners with disabilities), easy to use, and may be accessed by multiple operating</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course syllabus</li> <li>• Course materials</li> <li>• Assessment strategies</li>   <li>• Equal Opportunity policy</li> <li>• Access and special consideration policy</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Teaching & Learning	The centre uses effective strategies to facilitate learner-to-learner and centre-to-learner interactions and engagement throughout the course.	It is important to ensure that you communicate with your learners throughout their course of study by post, phone, face-to face, email, online chat video conference etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learner feedback</li> <li>• Learner Handbook</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluation and Assessment	The centre has a clear course evaluation strategy.	It is important that you collect learner feedback on the courses you provide by distance means on an annual basis. Such feedback should include items such as, the effectiveness of instruction and the quality of the course materials and support services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course evaluation forms</li> <li>• Annual course review</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 6.0 Useful contacts

For further guidance on online teaching please see here:

<https://www.slideshare.net/OthmQualifications/tips-for-teaching-online-2020>

For more information on our qualifications and services visit: [www.othm.org.uk](http://www.othm.org.uk).

Alternatively, call at: +44(0)20 7118 4243 or email at: [info@othm.org.uk](mailto:info@othm.org.uk)



# Distance, online and blended Learning Approval Form



Approved centres are required to complete this form when requesting approval to deliver OTHM qualifications by distance learning means

## Section 1: Centre Details

Centre Name			
Centre Number			
Centre Coordinator			
Email		Phone	

## Section 2: List of OTHM qualification(s) you wish to offer by distance, online or blended learning

Qualification (s) Title (as presented in the OTHM website)

## Section 3: Explain in the space below how you are able to meet the OTHM minimum requirements (Section 5.0) with regards to distance, online or blended learning provision

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## Section 4: List of facilities you are providing to learners e.g. library, computer lab, online resources, handouts, others

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## Section 5: Declaration statement

I declare that the information given in the above section and all appropriate documentation that is attached with this application, is true to the best of my knowledge and that we have the appropriate resources to deliver the proposed OTHM qualifications by distance learning effectively.

Name	
Signature	
Date	

Please convert this Form into PDF and email with required documents to: [admin@othm.org.uk](mailto:admin@othm.org.uk)

