



GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATION OF ELEARNING COURSES / PRODUCTS

Introduction

What is the aim of the Activity?

The aim of the activity is to write a review of an elearning course or product which will be read by other European art teachers who may be interested to use the product on the basis of your evaluation.

Therefore, when doing your evaluation, keep in mind that you are essentially doing it for the benefit of other art teachers like yourself.

What should you evaluate?

When evaluating elearning courses and products, **both technical and didactic concepts** should be evaluated. This is because the technical aspects of the course or product themselves have a didactic value if used in the correct way. In the case of cd rom based products or other such applications, the greater the level participation required from the user the better the course / product is from both a technical and a didactic point of view.

Analysis of the Evaluation form

Section 1

The first section of the form is straightforward to complete and requires factual and practical information about the course/product:

Title Of Product: Name of the course, website, cd rom etc.

Name Of Author(S): Who wrote the course or provided/collated the information on a website?

Name Of Producer: Who produced the course / website / cd rom?

Date Of Production: When was the product produced?

Type Of Product (Cd Rom, Website Video Etc): Specify what type of product it is

Duration (If Relevant): If it's a course, how long does it last?

Language/S Of Product: In what languages is the product available?

Cost Of Product (€): Is the product free of charge? If not how much does it cost?

Technical Requirements: What equipment is necessary to use the product?

Website Of The Product: The Website address of the product

Website Of Producer: Website address of the producer of the product

Where To Find It: Where can the product be found. If online give the website address.

Target Group: Does the course / product specify a target group? If so what is it?

Overall Evaluation: Tick the box which you feel reflects the quality of the course / product

Tutorial support: Can a tutor or even the course tutor be contacted? How?

Availability of learning community: Is there a forum, chat space, mailing list, newsgroup etc.? If not leave this section empty.

Section 2

This section requires you to provide descriptive text about the course / product and to evaluate it.

Objectives and Structure

- In this section you should give a description of the product as a whole, explaining what topics it addresses and its objectives.
- Does the course / product declare any didactic objectives. If so, are they clearly expressed.
- Does the course / product clearly indicate what skills the user should have to use it? If so, what skills are these?
- Can the user re-organise the materials or is it a definitive product which cannot be changed?

E.g there are some courses which contain tests that memorise the user's results and influence how the course continues.

Description of contents

You should write a description of the course / product that is useful to a teacher who may want to use it. It should be more than just the index! Think about what you would like to know about a course / product and perhaps add a comment on how it can be interlinked with subjects on the school curriculum of the schools in your country.

Evaluation and Comments

This section should consist of a brief text which is a sort of **critical review** of the course / product (about ½ page). You should write a simple and concise text but at the same time it should be useful for an art teaching colleague. Indicating with just a “yes” or a “no” to the points listed is not particularly useful for a colleague!

The form indicates a number of aspects to consider in your evaluation. It is not necessary to follow the points one after the other or to evaluate every single aspect but you should try to give as full an evaluation as possible. You are free to evaluate aspects which are not listed to make your evaluation as useful as possible to other art teachers in Europe.

Overall Evaluation - You should give an overall, global evaluation of the product which would be useful to a teaching colleague.

Clarity of structure, logical sequence - Comment on the structural clarity and didactic coherence. This means the accessibility and clarity of the product with particular attention to how the contents are structured. Is it structured in an ordered consequential fashion that is easy to follow, is it expressed in a hypertextual way or is unordered and unclear? Are the skills or knowledge necessary to use this product made clear?

Clarity of instructions for use – Is there a userguide available or a contextual help tool (for example the ‘?’ button in the Word programme) If there is not, indicate that there is not in your evaluation!

Usability / ease of navigation - This refers to if the slides are easy to follow, understand straight away the contents. Possibility of the product to be immediately understood by a user who is not familiar with the product. Is it easy to understand what the user has to do, where to click?

Is the product interesting / stimulating – Here you should give your views and that of your students if appropriate.

Education and learning value - You should give a description of the course's / product's teaching and training objectives and if they are effectively fulfilled.

E.g. a product has a strong didactic value if it fulfils the learning objectives that it aims to achieve.

Quality and relevancy of content – Is the content relevant to the topic? Is it of a high quality? In what way (*E.g. it may be very informative*).

Compatibility of content with target group - Does course / product say it is suitable for a particular target group (i.e age group, cultural group).If it does, is the contents coherent with this target group? Does the product address the topic in a suitable way for the target group?

E.g. a course on Pop Art may be full of material but presented in a way that is not suitable for its target group.

Suitability and quality of graphic interface - The graphic interface is the visual combination of both the graphics and functions of the visual aspects (page, screen etc.) of an application.

E.g. a button which has to be clicked. We receive from the programmer the suggestion that that button has to be clicked by shadows around the button that make it stand out. A shadow around box transforms that box into button, inviting us to click it. Evidently, this is a combination of graphics and function. An interface is suitable if it communicates to the user its function.

Another aspect to consider is the graphic-pictorial aspects of the visual and its aesthetical quality.

Degree and quality of interaction – With some courses / products the request for user participation is minimal e.g. user has to click a button to turn a page. In other courses / products user participation is much greater e.g. when in order to proceed with a course the user must have carried out exercises or tasks to continue or where it's possible to personalise a text or an adventure e.g. attributing a name to the protagonist of a videogame. Interaction can have different levels of quality and quantity depending on the programme used.

E.g. If the user has to keep clicking a button to continue with a course they will be interacting a lot but the quality of interaction is quite poor. If, when following a course a user has to carry out an exercise in order to proceed with the course, the quantity of interaction is lower than when compared to the page turning example above but is of a higher quality and therefore has greater value. The degree of interaction can be measured on the level of involvement of cognitive skills which is required on behalf of the user.

Is the product adequately exploiting the electronic potential - Need to consider if the technical use of the software and hardware exploits the great and different potentialities of electronic materials or if it is limited to transferring in electronic format something which could also exist in another form e.g. book or documentary. If the latter is the case then the evaluation is not very positive because it risks complicating the didactic process.

E.g. imagine a printed version of the product – would it be very different? If it would not be very different then there is not much point in it being electronic!

Availability and quality of simulation exercises – A simulation exercise allows the user to be transported into a particular virtual situation or role. It is difficult to find art products with such simulations.

Quality of evaluation tools - Are there evaluation tools? Are they useful? A multiple choice exercise may be considered more useful than a self-assessment test etc.

Possibility of printing/saving material or tests – Does the product allow you to print off material?

How could the product be improved - Indicate what you think could be done to improve the course / product. This is a very important aspect of your evaluation, don't be afraid to express your personal opinion!

Description of how used by students – Have you used this product with the students, if so how? What would be your suggestions to other art teachers who plan to use the course / product?