



Adult Learner Program Planning Diagnostic

Does Your Program Design Support Graduate and Online Enrollment Growth?

Program Planning Diagnostic

To successfully expand graduate enrollment in a competitive environment, academic leaders must consider numerous factors related to program design, admissions requirements, academic resource allocation, and more. This tool is designed to help graduate program leaders assess their own program planning practices and identify areas to critically evaluate in support of growth goals.

This diagnostic is designed to evaluate the following questions:

- When designing programs, to what extent do you take into account adult learners' enrollment preferences and your market environment?
- Are your admissions policies and practices student-centric and informed by your market environment?
- Are your online programs designed to grow and scale?

	This statement describes my institution.					Initial Observations <i>Elements you have already implemented, ways to integrate this idea into your current work, implementation hurdles, etc.</i>
Section 1: Program and Curriculum Design	<i>Disagree</i>		<i>Agree</i>			
Part-Time Our program(s) schedule courses to accommodate students who want to study part-time.	1	2	3	4	5	
Course Length The college or program evaluates course length, and for online courses, considers half-semester and full-semester courses.	1	2	3	4	5	
Assignment Relevance Assignments are offered with real-world professional options.	1	2	3	4	5	
Stackable Credentials Our programs include intermediate credentials.	1	2	3	4	5	
Tuition The college or program evaluates tuition based on market competitiveness.	1	2	3	4	5	
Market Relevance Leadership evaluates the program on a regular basis to ensure market relevance (e.g., with labor market demand data).	1	2	3	4	5	
Schedule Availability We plan academic schedules at least a year in advance, allowing students to anticipate necessary modifications to their personal/professional schedules.	1	2	3	4	5	

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Program and Curriculum Design						
<i>(Continued)</i>						
	<i>Disagree</i>			<i>Agree</i>		
Curricular Maps Maps include year-by-year integration of required courses and electives necessary to meet enrollment and completion goals.	1	2	3	4	5	
Summer Momentum Summer course offerings support curricular demands.	1	2	3	4	5	
Point Total for Section 1:						
Section 2:						
Admissions Policies and Practices						
	<i>Disagree</i>			<i>Agree</i>		
Admission Terms The college or program enrolls students at multiple terms per year (i.e., fall, spring, and summer).	1	2	3	4	5	
Application Review The college or program reviews completed applications on a rolling basis.	1	2	3	4	5	
Admissions Decisions The college or program, upon reviewing completed applications, makes admissions decisions on a continuous rolling basis.	1	2	3	4	5	
Prerequisites The college or program ensures that prerequisites are clearly communicated and available to students.	1	2	3	4	5	
Standardized Tests The college or program evaluates the use of standardized tests in the admissions process and takes into account competition and program requirements.	1	2	3	4	5	
Admissions Competition The college or program evaluates all admissions requirements, aside from standardized tests, against those of peers or competitors.	1	2	3	4	5	
Admissions Requirements The college or program ensures admissions requirements are published and clear for both online and on-campus programs (if applicable).	1	2	3	4	5	
Point Total for Section 2:						

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	This statement describes my institution.					Initial Observations <i>Elements you have already implemented, ways to integrate this idea into your current work, implementation hurdles, etc.</i>
Section 3: Considerations for Online Programs						
	<i>Disagree</i>			<i>Agree</i>		
Practicum/Clinical Experience Our program(s) and curricular model(s) accommodate adults studying at a distance to allow them to complete practicum or clinical experiences locally.	1	2	3	4	5	
Online Program Tuition We align online program tuition to market competitiveness and have evaluated using a flat tuition structure (i.e., same tuition for in-state and out-of-state students).	1	2	3	4	5	
Campus Residencies On-campus residencies for online programs are limited and evaluated for academic purpose.	1	2	3	4	5	
Orientation The college or program provides an online orientation to all new students before the start of classes	1	2	3	4	5	
Instructional Design The college or program utilizes trained instructional designers to build online courses	1	2	3	4	5	
State Authorization The college has a process in place to obtain and maintain state authorization as part of SARA.	1	2	3	4	5	
Point Total for Section 3:						
Section 4: Other Key Practices						
	<i>Disagree</i>			<i>Agree</i>		
Advisor Training The college or program has dedicated advising specialists for adult learner needs.	1	2	3	4	5	
Program Accreditation The college or program has a process in place to maintain programmatic accreditation and, if applicable, add online programs.	1	2	3	4	5	
Regional Accreditation The college has a process in place to maintain regional accreditation.	1	2	3	4	5	
Point Total for Section 4:						

Interpreting Your Results

Section	Point Total
1. Program and Curriculum Design	
2. Admissions Policies and Practices	
3. Considerations for Online Programs	
4. Other Key Practices	
Cumulative Total	

Cumulative Total	Assessment
25-58	Your institution has yet to implement most of these practices. Consider incorporating items from this list into your approach to program planning to support growth goals.
59-92	Your institution regularly takes into account key aspects of program planning that support growth but could benefit significantly from some of the practices described in this diagnostic.
93-125	Your institution has demonstrated an extremely market-savvy approach to program design.



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P 202-747-1000 | **F** 202-747-1010 | eab.com