STANDARD OVERVIEW

Learner-instructor interactions are how learners and instructors connect throughout a course. These connections should be both numerous and timely. Such interactions are crucial to a learner’s success as they contribute to the learner’s understanding and mastery of the course. At Katy Virtual School (KVS), learners know that they can communicate with their instructors both synchronously and asynchronously. At a minimum, KVS instructors are expected to grade and provide timely, comprehensive feedback to students, maintain weekly office hours, engage in synchronous learning opportunities, and proactively communicate with students through personalized communication.

STANDARD HIGHLIGHT

National Standards for Quality Online Courses
Standard C

Standard Highlighted

Standard C: Instructional Design
Indicator C8: The online course design provides opportunities for learner-instructor interaction, including opportunities for regular feedback about learner progress.

LEARNER TO INSTRUCTOR INTERACTION

The Whys & Hows of Learner to Instructor Interaction
HELPFUL HINTS

for putting standard into practice

- Ensure that opportunities for Learner-Instructor interactions are built into your course.
- Learner-instructor interactions help create a feeling of connection and can also make the course more enjoyable, both of which can increase learner engagement.
- Use learner-instructor interactions to build relationships and help the learner understand the instructor is actively engaged and cares about the learner’s success.
- Send a welcome letter at the beginning of the course to greet your learners.
- Have frequent and regular contact with your students. Weekly emails are a powerful way to stay connected and may include things like upcoming assignments and due dates.
- Utilize discussion boards as another way to provide learner-instructor interactions. Implement a frequently-asked-questions (FAQ) discussion board, monitored by the instructor, or an asynchronous discussion board where both the instructor and learner contribute.
- Post regular course announcements.
- Host synchronous online tutorial sessions and online office hours to provide clarification of coursework and help with understanding course content.
- Ensure email response is timely. Provide clear and detailed information to learners on how they are progressing through the course.
- Provide clear and detailed information to learners on how to they are progressing through the course, as well as on how to complete various assignments and projects.
- Provide prompt feedback on coursework such as assignments and projects.
- Check out the Annotations from the QM K-12 Rubric’s Specific Review Standard 5.3 C - they can help when applying NSQ Course Standard C8.

RESOURCES to support standard use (mostly practical)

- Creating a Sense of Instructor Presence in the Online Classroom
- Five Strategies for Enhancing Instructor Presence in Online Courses
- Building Community and Connection Between Students and Instructors in Asynchronous Courses
- Creating an Effective Online Instructor Presence
- The Power of Instructor Presence

Author/Organization Bio

Barbara Landreneau is a Coordinator for the Katy Virtual School where she oversees the development and management of Katy Independent School District’s online courses. She is a Quality Matters certified Master Reviewer and serves on the Quality Matters K-12 National Advisory Council. Barbara has also served on both the National Standards for Quality Online Programs revision committee and the Quality Matters K-12 fifth edition rubric review committee.