

# Ontario Exchange Definitions of Virtual Learning Services

*Note: The definitions below are specifically for use with Ontario Exchange (OEX) and may not align to the roles and services as defined by virtual learning content suppliers or member institutions. This document uses the terms virtual, online, and digital learning interchangeably, but further information can be found [in this report](#) from the Canadian Digital Learning Research Association (CDLRA).*

**Instructional Designers and Course Designers** help determine the needs and goals of learners, set strategies for teaching and learning complex concepts in a fully online or blended context, and translate these needs into engaging course materials using course authoring tools. They can also design assessment and evaluation strategies, to ensure that learners are meeting their goals effectively. Instructional designers are on the forefront of virtual learning innovation, developing new approaches for online learning such as interactive activities, gamified learning, or micro-learning.

While course or curriculum development are at the cores of their services, Instructional Designers have a great deal of responsibilities that support online learning development, such as ensuring accessibility and copyright compliance, or leading look and feel of course materials. These specialized roles are further broken out below for OEX uses:

- **Instructional Designers** author course materials, set strategies for online or blended learning contexts, and design assessment and evaluation strategies.
- **Content Editors** work with clients to refresh and uplift existing courseware, for example updating the branding or content of a course.
- **Copy Editing** is an important part of both creating net new content and refreshing existing online courses.
- **Project Management** is often overlooked, but essential to coordinating the many moving parts in a virtual learning project: for example, between client-side subject matter experts (SMEs) to media development and course design on the supplier-side.
- **User Testing and Evaluation** can be conducted to ensure that course materials are intuitive and meeting their learning goals.
- **Web Accessibility Support** specialists audit ensure compliance with accessibility standards and provide strategies and recommendations for improving accessibility in courseware.
- **Open Education Support** specialists ensure creative commons or other open copyright and licensing practices are deployed to maximize the reuse, remixing, and redistribution of Open Educational Resources (OERs). OERs can be textbooks, videos, test banks, modules, podcasts and more. Support can be requested to adapt existing courseware to be OERs.
- **Media/LMS Integration** specialists can help customize Learning Management Systems (LMS), integrate or update courseware for an LMS, train staff in LMS maintenance.

- **Translation** helps provide written or oral information to institutions to make OERs accessible to a broader audience. Translation services verify the content for accuracy and quality and ensure that the course materials are culturally appropriate and respectful for the target audience.

**Multimedia Development** and media design is closely related to instructional design services, and many online learning suppliers provide both. Advanced multimedia design is key to creating immersion for the learner, using illustrations, videos, motion graphics and animation, 3D modelling, photography, and sound design to enhance course content. The constant evolution of digital technologies also means that possibilities for multimedia design are expanding: virtual or augmented reality, advanced photogrammetry, and experimentation with game engines are a few examples of how multimedia design is creating new ways to reach and immerse learners.

- **Multimedia Development**, for the purposes of OEX, will include:
  - Advanced custom course authoring
  - Video production, motion graphics, and animation
  - Sound design
  - Photography
  - Custom coding or advanced web development
- **Graphic Design** helps support overall organizational branding beyond individual illustrations or courses, for example supporting the creation of style guides or course templates.
- **Virtual and Augmented Reality (VR/AR)** is increasingly being employed and integrated within online learning in innovative ways.