PRIMO: What to Know Before You Submit

The Peer-Reviewed Instructional Materials Online (PRIMO) committee selects high-quality materials created by libraries that address educational topics in our current information landscape. We, the committee members, review submissions using a set of criteria, and we individually rate submissions on a 0-5 scale for each criterion.

The evaluation criteria were revised in 2017 to reflect changes in expectations for online learning content and an increased need for accessible materials. We realize that those submitting content to PRIMO may have additional questions about these expectations and this document was intended to help to clarify these guidelines and address common issues noted with past submissions.

Please be sure to review the full language of the the criteria on the [PRIMO website](#), with particular focus on the project scope noted at the bottom of the page. A number of PRIMO submissions do not make it to the review process because they fall outside the project scope.

Criterion #1

The resource's instructional design is pedagogically effective, i.e., it teaches well according to the scope and learning objectives stated by the submitter.

- A successful submission will have clear learning objectives stating what the learner will be able to accomplish as a result of completing the tutorial.
- Use [Bloom's Taxonomy](#) to analyze objectives and content to determine if you're moving learners to higher levels of thinking. Are you just asking students to remember and recall information (e.g., multiple choice questions at the end of a module reviewing information), or are you asking them to evaluate, analyze, or create (e.g., examine passages of text for plagiarism and explain answers)?
- This [PRIMO project from Arizona State](#) provides a good example of clear learning objectives which move learners up to higher-order thinking by starting with them being able to define and ending with them being able to apply and create.

Criterion #2

The resource incorporates assessment tools and technique(s).
- Successful submissions provide multiple opportunities for students to test and prove what they know or have learned. Assessments should be clearly tied to the stated learning objectives and can be diagnostic (pre-test), formative (during the

instruction with the outcomes changing the user experience), or summative (at the end, assessing what a student knows after completing it).
- Consider what assessment methods would provide the most complete picture of student learning. Assessment methods and types depend on the outcomes of the project, the audience, and the scope of the project.
- This PRIMO project from California State University, Fullerton, "Basics of APA Style" is an example that includes authentic assessment. This PRIMO project from the New Literacies Alliance, "Scholarship is Like a Conversation" provides an example of how multiple choice questions can be used throughout a tutorial to check student understanding of concepts.

Criterion #3

The technology used to create the resource enhances the learning experience, i.e., is appropriate and effective.
- A successful submission has technology that works and works easily on a variety of platforms, so that regardless of the device or system, the learner has a seamless experience.
- Technology should be used in effective and useful ways, rather than using technology for technology's sake. If the technology is difficult to use or distracting, then it isn't contributing to the learning experience.
- Production value also matters. We don't all have the ability to get the highest quality equipment, but the submission should look professional and the sound quality should be clear.
- The Y Search modules from Brigham Young University are an example of technology that enhances the learning experience.

Criterion #4

The content and language of the resource are clear, effective, and easy to use.

- Submissions should be free from spelling and grammatical errors and graphics should be utilized in a structured, appropriate way that highlights written content rather than detracts from it. Users should also be able to understand any provided learning objectives, instructions, and assessment questions.
- Content should be laid out in a logical manner and core competencies should be scaffolded. The resource's interface should be easy to navigate and intuitive, free from clutter, and with modules appropriately labeled.
- Research Essentials Online, a project from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, is a good example of a well-written resource with a clear method of progression through the tutorial. .

Criterion #5

All information included within the resource is accurate.

- It is critical that all resources be accurate, from typos to basic facts.
- Users should be provided fundamental background information about who created and maintains the resource and when it was last updated. This information should be easily visible.
- Consider having multiple people review the content to make sure the meaning is clear and that any non-common knowledge claims are based on citable, verified sources.
- Include background information about the tutorial's creation and maintenance -- we want to be able to easily determine when the tutorial was created, when it was last updated, who did the updating, and who a user might go to with questions.
- This Tutorial for Engineers utilizes the layout of the LibGuide format to show all the details necessary

Criterion #6

The resource adheres to W3C's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

- Use tools to create your content that are accessible. Look at the documentation on the developer's website or find discussions on accessibility forums.
- Take advantage of built-in accessibility features. For example, software used for building tutorials might let you specify a reading order, or add captions.
- If you are new to web accessibility, WebAIM's "Introduction to Web Accessibility" and associated articles are a good place to start.

Specific suggestions:
- There is an index, table of contents, or site map to facilitate navigation, and each page has a descriptive title.
    - You don't need to include every single page on your table of contents, but ensure that users are able to at least jump between the major chunks of content
    - If you are using a slide-based editor (PowerPoint, some Captivate projects, etc.), look at the documentation to determine how to add titles to each slide.
    - If you are building an HTML site, see this article for information about page titles.
- Images are accompanied by detailed text alternatives.
    - Any image that adds meaning to your tutorial needs descriptive alternative text. Most web editors have the option to add alternative text (alt text) when you upload an image. This text should go beyond a basic description (e.g. an infographic about evaluating sources) to give users a way to understand both the content and the function of the image within your resource.
    - WedAIM provides a detailed discussion of how to create useful alt text.
- Captions or transcripts are provided for audio and video content.

- ○ Most video hosting platforms make it easy to either auto-generate or upload a caption file that you have created.
  - ○ Make sure you edit any auto-generated captions to ensure they accurately reflect the spoken content.
  - ○ If you are unfamiliar with creating captions, WebAIM has a good [introduction](#).
  - ○ YouTube also provides documentation for [how to create and edit captions](#).
- ● Enough time is provided to read and use content. Audio and video elements must have player controls that allow the user to pause or navigate forward and backward.
  - ○ Avoid videos or audio that autoplay on a page.
- ● There is a visible and logical sequence or structure to the content, including tab sequence on keyboard operation.
  - ○ When creating an HTML page, LibGuide, or other document, make use of built-in [semantic headings](#) and other structure elements to make your content easier to navigate.
  - ○ Specify reading order in PDFs, PowerPoints, and other similar content (refer to the documentation for your particular product).
  - ○ Try pressing the Tab key to navigate through your material. Are you moving through in a logical order?
- ● Instructions and content do not rely on image characteristics such as color, shape, or size for imparting information.
  - ○ WebAIM provides [a guide](#) to designing for visual disabilities as well as an overview of the topic.
- ● Interactive elements can be controlled by the keyboard in addition to or instead of the mouse.
  - ○ Try pressing the Tab key to navigate through your material. Are you able to get to all the content on the page? Can you play any videos or audio, open documents, and go to the next page? Are there any elements that you can only get to by clicking with a mouse?
  - ○ For basic keyboard testing strategies, start with this [WebAIM article](#).
  - ○ If you have the time, test your tutorial with a free screen reader. [NVDA](#) is the most robust free screen reader. WebAIM has a [list of commonly used NVDA keyboard shortcuts](#).

Criterion #7

The resource demonstrates unique or creative use of graphics, examples, interactive elements such as programmed feedback and flexible learning paths, and other supporting elements.

- ● Successful submissions require the learner the interact with the content. Intersperse interactive elements throughout the module to increase engagement and test the learner's comprehension at key moments.
- ● Consider using programmed feedback suggesting hints or tips towards the correct answer. Ensure that the learner knows how to access additional help if necessary.

- Use a variety of interactive elements, such as matching, click-and-drop, multiple choice, puzzles, fill-in-the-blanks, etc., providing accessible alternatives to interactive elements
- Use multimedia elements to convey information in addition to text-based methods
- Consider using flexible learning paths and/or providing learner control over the pace of learning, if appropriate.

Criterion #8

The resource is relevant, available and accessible to those outside of the developer's institution, and presents a model for other developers.

- PRIMO values submissions that can benefit as wide an audience as possible. Some of the best tutorials are integrated with local curriculum, but if they're so deeply entwined that anyone from the outside can't benefit from them, they're not really PRIMO material..
- Submissions should be freely available. A resource that can't be shared isn't of much value to the profession as a whole.
- Successful submissions should allow other creators to learn and benefit from it. You could use a new approach or execute a familiar approach in an excellent manner.
  - If your tutorial only employs well-known and time-tested solutions and technology, there might not be anything there for others to draw from, so that tutorial might not score well for this criterion.