



# QUALITY ASSURANCE IN DIGITAL RESOURCE PRODUCTION

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## **Preface**

In general terms quality assurance, or a quality management system, is a method of ensuring a consistent standard of deliverables – whether goods or services – so that the requirements of the client or user are satisfied or exceeded. A QA process is at the heart of producing a professional and consistent product or service.

## What is a high-quality digital resource?

At TLF we are in the business of making **digital educational materials** – so, what do we need to do to satisfy or exceed our users' requirements?

Since the resources are digital:

- there is an expectation that audio and image quality are of a consistently high standard;
- there is a basic expectation that links and other functionality within the resource operate smoothly;
- there are expectations about the standard of access, delivery and search functions for downstream users.

Because the resources are educational:

- users expect the resources to be educationally sound;
- they expect text to be well expressed and easy to understand;
- there is an expectation, since the assets are provided by partner institutions, that the intellectual property rights management and acknowledgements are the best possible.

At The Le@rning Federation we have built quality assurance of all these elements into our production system; that is, we input relevant expertise at appropriate stages of production, ensuring that all aspects of our resources achieve an appropriately high standard.

## Educational text

For digital resources, TLF's areas of expertise cover the quality requirements outlined above.

- The **writer** provides research and text about the particular item and the **educational soundness reviewer** works with the writer to ensure that the text is relevant to teaching and learning.
- The **curriculum adviser** checks the draft manuscript in relation to curriculum fit and opportunities for learning as set out in the Statements of Learning.
- The source institution's **curator** provides feedback to guarantee the integrity of the information provided about the item.
- After the draft manuscript has passed scrutiny by these experts, the editor checks it for readability and consistency – to ensure that the language is appropriate for the audience and educational purpose.

## Intellectual property

The IP process is designed to allow students and teachers to use content in a rights-responsible manner. TLF has developed a world-leading system for ensuring the integrity of intellectual property information, and for ensuring that all permissions and licences are in place.

## Metadata and technical aspects

Our metadata experts review the keywords and spatial, temporal and relation metadata to guarantee search and other metadata functionality is of the highest standard. The web officer ensures that the technical aspects, such as links and audio and visual standards, meet TLF's specifications.

## Process

The input from any area of expertise is made at a point in the staged process that avoids a need to repeat a stage. This creates an efficient and effective workflow as well as a quality assurance process. Once the manuscript has been transferred into the format in which it will be published, it is reviewed again by all areas of expertise to make certain all quality requirements have been met in the completed digital resource.

Using a QA process ensures that clients and users can be confident that a product or service will consistently satisfy their requirements. In turn, supplier costs are reduced as returns and rejects are minimised. Quality assurance is an arm of risk management in that it prevents the delivery of a product that is of an unacceptable standard.