

FOCUS ON: Interactivity & Engagement & Reinforcement of Learning

*In order to prepare providers for the changes in accreditation/certification requirements related to Mainpro+ we will be providing a series of communication pieces to help familiarize providers with the Quality Criteria requirements. The fourth in this series will be **Quality Criterion 2, Interactivity & Engagement and Quality Criterion 6 Reinforcement of Learning**. Our aim will be to address common questions and concerns we have heard regarding the criterion and to provide context for its inclusion in the certification requirements. To view other articles in this series please click [here](#).*

How does interactivity contribute to learner engagement?

Significant evidence exists to support the notion that interactive teaching and learning is superior to purely didactic learning¹. Interactive learning allows for deeper learner engagement which aids in accomplishing both understanding and adoption of new skills and competency in practice². In particular in the world of continuing professional development (CPD) interactivity, and active learning play an important role in adult learning theory. Adult learners are more interested in education formats that involve them in identifying their own learning needs and then provide them with active problem based approaches to meeting these learning needs³



Examples of Interactive Components

Activities, environment, and teaching techniques for Mainpro+ certified programs must be conducive to effective learning and support the learning objectives of the program.

Interactivity with program content may take a number of forms including, but not limited to:

- Audience-based data collection tools (iClickers, etc.)
- Case studies
- Quizzes
- Small-group discussions
- Simulation-based activities
- Immersive learning
- Activities that can be applied to participants' practices



Interactivity and Online Learning

Exemplary online CPD programs include interactive components to ensure that learners remain engaged with the content presented. At a minimum designers of online learning environments need to plan opportunities for learner to content interaction and learner to instructor interaction. Ideally there should also include an element of learner to learner interaction. Research states that for online learning to be of greatest benefit it should include: frequent opportunity for the learner to make a variety of choices, it should have limited didactic content, and include active and ongoing forms of communication with the learner⁴.

Examples of Online Interactivity and Engagement Activities

- Discussion boards/chatrooms
- Immersive learning (virtual reality)
- Scenario based learning (choose your own adventure)
- Case-based components
- Game-based learning

Reinforcement of Learning

Educational interventions provide greater impact for learners when learning occurs over a continuum of time versus during a single, finite period or session. Mainpro has long recognized the value of educational strategies that reinforce and/or facilitate continued learning, because these strategies:

- Encourage participants to reflect upon what they have gained from completing the educational intervention and how it might affect, or has affected, their practice
- Provide opportunities for participants to continue a dialogue with colleagues and/or faculty after having had the opportunity to apply new knowledge, skills, or attitudes in practice
- Help with recall and retention of information

Examples of Reinforcement Activities



- ⇒ Performance and/or knowledge test
- ⇒ Follow-up chart audit with feedback
- ⇒ Open-ended reflective questionnaire
- ⇒ Post-program teleconference/web conference
- ⇒ Reminders
- ⇒ Checklists
- ⇒ Academic detailing
- ⇒ Patient education materials
- ⇒ Commitment to change contract

Quality Criterion 2: Interactivity and Engagement

Programs seeking Mainpro+ certification must meet the following requirements in regards to interactivity and engagement in program design and delivery.

Credits per Hour	Certification Requirements for Criterion
1 credit per hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 25% of the program is conducted in an interactive manner
2 credits per hour	<p>Must meet 1 credit per hour requirements and include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 25 and 50% of the program is conducted in an interactive manner • Learner engagement goes beyond audience Q & A • Includes opportunities for participants to engage with each other, with facilitators, and with material being taught. (For Self-Learning category programs require engagement with facilitators and materials being taught only) • Component of the activity is based on small groups or workshops (For Self-Learning category small group requirement is replaced with case-based learning component).
3 credits per hour	<p>Must meet 1 and 2 credit per hour requirements and include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program must be based on small-group learning (For Self-Learning category programs must be based on case-based or immersive scenario learning) • Program includes activities that can be applied to participants practice • Program includes formal reflection on application of learning to practice over a realistic time period to assess practice change.

Quality Criterion 6: Reinforcement of Learning

Programs seeking Mainpro+ certification beyond one credit per hour must meet the following requirements in regards to reinforcement of learning in program design and delivery.

Credits per Hour	Certification Requirements for Criterion
1 credit per hour N/A	Not required for one credit per hour
2 credits per hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Incorporates one or more validated strategies to reinforce and/or facilitate continued learning
3 credits per hour	Must meet 2 credit per hour requirements and include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Incorporates two or more validated strategies; ideally administered at staggered time intervals (6 and 12 weeks for example)

References & Further Reading

1. Khan K, Coomarasamy A. *BMC Medical Education*. 2006;6(1):59. doi:10.1186/1472-6920-6-59.
2. Kaufman D. ABC of learning and teaching in medicine: Applying educational theory in practice. *BMJ*. 2003;326(7382):213-216. doi:10.1136/bmj.326.7382.213.
3. Moller L. Designing communities of learners for asynchronous distance education. *ETR&D*. 1998;46(4):115-122. doi:10.1007/bf02299678.
4. Baker J, Woods R. Immediacy, cohesiveness, and the online classroom. *J Comput High Educ*. 2004;15(2):133-151. doi:10.1007/bf02940934.
5. Aronson L. Twelve tips for teaching reflection at all levels of medical education. *Med Teach*. 2011;33(3):200-205. doi:10.3109/0142159x.2010.507714.