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Education and learning services — Vocabulary

Services d'éducation et d'apprentissage — Vocabulaire

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 232, *Education and learning services.*

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

This document contains 100 terminological entries. The entries are arranged in different categories, logically based on different items and contents involved in education and learning services (e.g. organization, person, activity, assessment, evaluation, resource and document, management system). An alphabetical index is provided at the end of this document.

The harmonization of terms and definitions in the field of education and learning services at the ISO level is important, although some terms and definitions are used inconsistently. Listing all the terms and definitions does not endorse this inconsistency but provides a reference for related standards development and revision, and encourages this harmonization work.

Education and learning services — Vocabulary

1 Scope

This document is the source document for the terms and definitions of ISO/TC 232, *Education and learning services*.

This document is intended to provide a reference for standards users and developers, as well as to facilitate communication and common understanding of the terms within the field of education and learning services and the scope of ISO/TC 232.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

3.1 General terms

3.1.1
learning service
sequence of activities designed to enable *'B' learning* (3.3.2)

3.1.2
educational service
process (3.7.8) that supports acquisition and development of *'A' learners'* (3.2.7) *'A' competence* (3.4.13) through *teaching* (3.3.10), learning or research

3.2 Terms related to organizations and people

3.2.1
organization
person (3.2.6) or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its *objectives* (3.7.6)

Note 1 to entry: The concept of organization includes, but is not limited to, sole-trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.

3.2.2
educational organization
organization (3.2.1) whose core business is the provision of *educational products* (3.6.2) and *educational services* (3.1.2)

Note 1 to entry: This can include an educational organization within a larger organization whose core business is not education, such as a professional training department.

3.2.3
learning service provider
LSP
organization or individual providing *learning services* (3.1.1) outside formal education, including any associates involved in the provision of the learning service

3.2.4
language-learning service provider
LLSP
organization or individual providing *language-learning services* (3.3.9) outside formal education, including any personnel involved in the provision of the language-learning service

3.2.5
distance learning service provider
DLSP
organization or individual providing *distance learning services* (3.3.5), including any associates involved in the provision of the distance learning services

3.2.6
person
individual
human being, i.e. a natural person, who acts as a distinct indivisible entity or is considered as such

3.2.7
'A' learner
beneficiary (3.2.22) acquiring and developing *'A' competence* (3.4.13) using an *educational service* (3.1.2)

3.2.8
'B' learner
<language-learning services> person engaged in language *'A' learning* (3.3.1)

3.2.9
'C' learner
person engaged in *'B' learning* (3.3.2)

3.2.10
'D' learner
person engaged in distance learning

3.2.11
continuous professional development
ongoing intentional enhancement of professional knowledge or of professional *'B' competence* (3.4.14)

3.2.12
staff
persons (3.2.6) who work for and within an *organization* (3.2.1)

3.2.13
'A' facilitator
person who works with *'C' learners* (3.2.9) to assist them with *'B' learning* (3.3.2)

Note 1 to entry: A facilitator is also often referred to as a *teacher* (3.2.15), a trainer, a coach, a tutor or a mentor.

3.2.14
'B' facilitator
person who works with learners to assist them with learning

Note 1 to entry: A facilitator is also often referred to as a *teacher* (3.2.15), a trainer, a coach, a tutor or a mentor.

3.2.15
teacher
person whose job is to provide instruction and facilitate *'A' learning* (3.3.1), whether in an educational institution or professional training environment

3.2.16
educator
person (3.2.6) who performs *teaching* (3.3.10) activities

Note 1 to entry: In different contexts, an educator is sometimes referred to as a *teacher* (3.2.15), a trainer, a coach, a facilitator, a tutor, a consultant, an instructor, a lecturer or a mentor.

3.2.17
'A' interested party
stakeholder
person (3.2.6) or *organization* (3.2.1) that can affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision or activity

Note 1 to entry: ISO 21001:2018, Annex C, gives a classification of interested parties in *educational organizations* (3.2.2).

3.2.18
'B' interested party
individual, group or organization with a direct or indirect interest in the *learning service* (3.1.1), including its management and outcomes, or the processes involved, or both

3.2.19
'A' sponsor
<language-learning services> organization or individual that acquires *language-learning services* (3.3.9) on behalf of *'B' learners* (3.2.8), that provides financial or other support for them, or has a vested interest in the outcome of the language learning

Note 1 to entry: Sponsors include corporations, government agencies and persons.

3.2.20
'B' sponsor
organization or individual that acquires *learning services* (3.1.1) on behalf of *'C' learners* (3.2.9), that provides financial or other support for them, or that has a vested interest in the outcome of the *'B' learning* (3.3.2)

Note 1 to entry: Sponsors include corporations, government agencies and individuals.

3.2.21
'C' sponsor
organization or individual that acquires *distance learning servic*es (3.3.5) on behalf of learners, provides financial or other support for them or has a vested interest in the outcome of the learning

EXAMPLE   Corporations, government agencies, persons.

3.2.22
beneficiary
person (3.2.6) or group of people benefiting from the products and services of an *educational organization* (3.2.2) and whom the educational organization is obliged to serve by virtue of its *mission* (3.7.18)

Note 1 to entry: ISO 21001:2018, Annex D, includes a list of beneficiaries.

3.2.23
instructional designer
person who crafts content for a learning experience, using systematic methodologies and instructional theory

Note 1 to entry: Instructional designers can work alone or lead teams that include writers, editors, graphic designers, artists, subject matter experts, assessment specialists and other professionals tasked with the work of content and curriculum development. In a small enterprise or institution, a single individual can play the roles of both instructional designer and facilitator.

Note 2 to entry: It includes a scope and sequence, curriculum and syllabus for the distance learning experience.

3.2.24
technical literacy
ability to use, manage, understand and assess technology

3.3 Terms related to education and learning activities

3.3.1
'A' learning
<language-learning services> acquiring knowledge, behaviour, skills, values, preferences or understanding in the language domain

3.3.2
'B' learning
acquiring knowledge, behaviour, skills, values, preferences or understanding

3.3.3
'C' learning
acquiring knowledge, behaviour, skills, values, preferences or understanding

3.3.4
lifelong learning
provision or use of learning opportunities throughout people's lives in order to foster their continuous development

3.3.5
distance learning service
sequence of activities, designed to enable learning, delivered while learners and facilitators are separated by time, space or both

EXAMPLE   Correspondence courses, online learning and mobile learning.

3.3.6
e-learning
'A' learning (3.3.1) facilitated by information and communications technology

3.3.7
'A' blended learning
combination of face-to-face *'A' learning* (3.3.1) with *e-learning* (3.3.6)

3.3.8
'B' blended learning
combination of different modes of *'B' learning* (3.3.2)

Note 1 to entry: Modes of learning include face-to-face learning and IT-supported learning.

3.3.9
language-learning service
process or sequence of activities designed to enable language learning

3.3.10
teaching
working with *'A' learners* ([3.2.7](#)) to assist and support them with learning

Note 1 to entry: Working with learners implies designing, leading and following up learning activities.

Note 2 to entry: Teaching can combine different roles: content delivery, facilitation, mentorship, community building and, to a certain extent, counselling and providing academic guidance.

3.4   Terms related to assessment

3.4.1
'A' assessment
<language-learning services> gathering of language data to determine the language ability of an individual language *'B' learner* ([3.2.8](#)) or group of learners

3.4.2
'B' assessment
test, examination, observation or other process designed to measure an examinee's knowledge, competence or performance in a defined area against specific reference points or standards (educational or professional)

3.4.3
'C' assessment
gathering of data to determine the *'B' learning* ([3.3.2](#)) outcomes of an individual *'C' learner* ([3.2.9](#)) or group of learners

3.4.4
assessor
person or organization responsible for interpreting an examinee's performance on the assessment tasks and providing appropriate reporting and feedback to examinees and the client

Note 1 to entry: Assessors are competent to make decisions about the use and interpretation of assessment procedures. In relation to psychological testing, in some countries they are referred to as "test users" to distinguish them from "test proctors", "test administrators" or "monitors". Assessors can be employees of the service provider or the client, or third parties contracted for the purposes of the assessment.

3.4.5
proctor
invigilator
authorised person who administers or supervises an assessment

3.4.6
scorer
rater
qualified and trained person who assigns a score to an examinee's performance based on defined criteria

3.4.7
assessment developer
organization or individual responsible for the planning, development, delivery and quality assurance of assessments

3.4.8
assessment sponsor
organization or individual accountable for the acquisition, development or selection of assessments

3.4.9
diagnostic assessment
assessment which identifies what the learner already knows, the nature of any difficulties that the learner has, or both

3.4.10
hand scoring
human scoring of an examinee's response to an item using an answer key in which all acceptable responses are predetermined

3.4.11
live scoring
human scoring of an assessment during or immediately following the administration of an assessment

3.4.12
machine scoring
automatic scoring of an item using technology

Note 1 to entry: Machine scoring is an emerging technology where, for example, a computer program automatically scores a computer-based assessment.

3.4.13
'A' competence
ability to apply *knowledge* (3.4.19) and *'A' skills* (3.4.17) to achieve intended results

Note 1 to entry: The ability to apply knowledge and skills means that the *learner* (3.2.7) demonstrates appropriate attitudes and behaviour in different contexts or situations with responsibility and autonomy.

3.4.14
'B' competence
<language-learning services> ability to apply *knowledge* (3.4.19) and skills to achieve intended outcomes

3.4.15
'C' competence
ability to apply *knowledge* (3.4.19) and *'B' skills* (3.4.18) to achieve intended outcomes

Note 1 to entry: The ability to apply knowledge and skills means that the learner demonstrates appropriate attitudes and behaviour in different contexts or situations with responsibility and autonomy.

3.4.16
'D' competence
ability to apply *knowledge* (3.4.19) and skills to achieve intended results

3.4.17
'A' skill
set of know-how that allows a *person* (3.2.6) to master an activity and succeed in accomplishing a task

Note 1 to entry: These can be cognitive, emotional, social or psychomotor skills.

3.4.18
'B' skill
ability to perform a task or activity with a specific intended outcome acquired through education, training, experience or other means

3.4.19
knowledge
facts, information, principles or understanding acquired through experience, research or education

3.4.20
qualification
demonstrated education, training and work experience, where applicable

3.4.21
award
<language-learning services> designation given by a *language-learning service provider* (3.2.4) to a *'B' learner* (3.2.8) in order to indicate a level of performance or attainment, or the completion of an *'A' learning* (3.3.1) programme

3.5 Terms related to evaluation

3.5.1
'A' evaluation
<language-learning services> systematic gathering of information in order to make decisions about possible adjustments to the *language-learning service* (3.3.9)

3.5.2
'B' evaluation
systematic gathering of information, including the results of *'C' assessment* (3.4.3) and *'B' monitoring* (3.5.6), in order to make decisions about possible adjustments to the *learning service* (3.1.1)

3.5.3
'C' evaluation
systematic gathering of information in order to make decisions about possible adjustments to the distance learning service

3.5.4
measurement
process (3.7.8) to determine a value

3.5.5
'A' monitoring
determining the status of a system, a *process* (3.7.8) or an activity

Note 1 to entry: To determine the status, there can be a need to check, supervise or critically observe.

3.5.6
'B' monitoring
continuous examination of progress achieved during the implementation of the *learning service* (3.1.1) to track conformity with the plan and to take necessary decisions to improve performance

3.6 Terms related to resources and documents

3.6.1
learning resource
material, environment, human resource, information or other asset that can be drawn on by the *learning service provider* (3.2.3) in order to facilitate *'B' learning* (3.3.2) effectively

3.6.2
educational product
learning resource
tangible or intangible goods used in pedagogical support of an *educational service* (3.1.2)

Note 1 to entry: Educational products can be either physical or digital and can include textbooks, workbooks, worksheets, manipulatives (e.g. blocks, beads), flashcards, *educator* (3.2.16) workshops, non-fiction books, posters, educational games, applications, websites, software, online *courses* (3.6.10), activity books, graphic novels, reference books, DVDs, CDs, magazines and periodicals, study guides, educator guides, laboratories, models, movies, televisions shows, webcasts, podcasts, maps and atlases, standards, technical specifications and case studies.

Note 2 to entry: Educational products can be produced by any parties, including *learners* (3.2.7).

3.6.3
'A' learning environment
classrooms, multimedia rooms and other physical spaces used for language learning, as well as the furniture and equipment they contain

3.6.4
'B' learning environment
classrooms, multimedia rooms and other physical or virtual spaces used for *'B' learning* (3.3.2)

3.6.5
'C' learning environment
physical or virtual environment in support of a learner

3.6.6
'A' curriculum
documented information ([3.6.12](#)) of what, why, how and how well *'A' learners* ([3.2.7](#)) should learn in a systematic and intentional way

Note 1 to entry: A curriculum can include the learning aims or *objectives* ([3.7.6](#)), content, learning outcomes, *teaching* ([3.3.10](#)) and learning methods, *performance* ([3.7.9](#)) indicators, assessment methods or research plans that are related to learning. It can also be referred to as a *'A' competence* ([3.4.13](#)) profile, competence referential, study *programme* ([3.6.11](#)) or teaching plan

3.6.7
'B' curriculum
<language-learning services> plan of study prepared by the *language-learning service provider* ([3.2.4](#)), which describes the aims, content, *'A' learning* ([3.3.1](#)) outcomes, learning and teaching methods, and *'A' assessment* ([3.4.1](#)) processes

3.6.8
'C' curriculum
plan of study prepared by the *learning service provider* ([3.2.3](#)) which describes the aims, content, *learning resources* ([3.6.1](#)) and *'B' learning* ([3.3.2](#)) outcomes

3.6.9
'D' curriculum
course of study prepared by the *distance learning service provider* ([3.2.5](#)) which describes the aims, content, learning outcomes, learning and teaching methods, and assessment processes

3.6.10
course
distinct set of *teaching* ([3.3.10](#)) and learning activities, designed to meet defined learning *objectives* ([3.7.6](#)) or learning outcomes

Note 1 to entry: A course is sometimes referred to as a credit-unit or a subject.

3.6.11
programme
consistent set of *courses* ([3.6.10](#)) designed to meet defined learning *objectives* ([3.7.6](#)) or learning outcomes, and leading to recognition

Note 1 to entry: Recognition can take the form of a degree, a certificate of completion, participation or achievement, a badge, diploma and other forms.

3.6.12
documented information
information required to be controlled and maintained by an *organization* ([3.2.1](#)) and the medium in which it is contained

Note 1 to entry: Documented information can be in any format and media, and from any source.

Note 2 to entry: Documented information can refer to:

— the *management system* ([3.7.1](#)), including related *processes* ([3.7.8](#));

— information created in order for the organization to operate (documentation);

— evidence of results achieved (records).

3.6.13
authentic material
<language-learning services> material not originally produced for language-learning purposes, but for purposes of real communication

3.6.14
learner support
assistance provided to help learners with their learning

Note 1 to entry: Learner support can be provided by administrators, counsellors, technical support staff, facilitators or technology (e.g. artificial intelligence robot).

3.7 Terms related to management systems

3.7.1
management system
set of interrelated or interacting elements of an *organization* (3.2.1) to establish *policies* (3.7.5) and *objectives* (3.7.6) and *processes* (3.7.8) to achieve those objectives

Note 1 to entry: A management system can address a single discipline or several disciplines.

Note 2 to entry: The system elements include the organization's structure, roles and responsibilities, planning and operation.

Note 3 to entry: The scope of a management system can include the whole of the organization, specific and identified functions of the organization, specific and identified sections of the organization, or one or more functions across a group of organizations.

3.7.2
requirement
need or expectation that is stated, generally implied or obligatory

Note 1 to entry: "Generally implied" means that it is custom or common practice for the *organization* (3.2.1) and *'A' interested parties* (3.2.17) that the need or expectation under consideration is implied.

Note 2 to entry: A specified requirement is one that is stated, for example in *documented information* (3.6.12).

3.7.3
top management
person (3.2.6) or group of people who directs and controls an *organization* (3.2.1) at the highest level

Note 1 to entry: Top management has the power to delegate authority and provide resources within the organization.

Note 2 to entry: If the scope of the *management system* (3.7.1) covers only part of an organization, then top management refers to those who direct and control that part of the organization.

3.7.4
effectiveness
extent to which planned activities are realized and planned results achieved

3.7.5
policy
intentions and direction of an *organization* (3.2.1), as formally expressed by its *top management* (3.7.3)

3.7.6
objective
result to be achieved

Note 1 to entry: An objective can be strategic, tactical or operational.

Note 2 to entry: Objectives can relate to different disciplines (e.g. educational, financial, health and safety, and environmental goals) and can apply at different levels [e.g. strategic, organization-wide, project, product and *process* (3.7.8)].

Note 3 to entry: An objective can be expressed in other ways, for example as an intended outcome, a purpose, an operational criterion or a management system for educational organizations (EOMS) objective, or by the use of other words with a similar meaning (e.g. aim, goal or target).

Note 4 to entry: In the context of EOMS, EOMS objectives are set by the organization, consistent with the EOMS *policy* (3.7.5), to achieve specific results.

3.7.7
risk
effect of uncertainty

Note 1 to entry: An effect is a deviation from the expected – positive or negative.

Note 2 to entry: Uncertainty is the state, even partial, of deficiency of information related to, understanding or *knowledge* (3.4.19) of, an event, its consequence or likelihood.

Note 3 to entry: Risk is often characterized by reference to potential "events" (as defined in ISO Guide 73:2009, 3.5.1.3) and "consequences" (as defined in ISO Guide 73:2009, 3.6.1.3), or a combination of these.

Note 4 to entry: Risk is often expressed in terms of a combination of the consequences of an event (including changes in circumstances) and the associated "likelihood" (as defined in ISO Guide 73:2009, 3.6.1.1) of occurrence.

3.7.8
process
set of interrelated or interacting activities which transforms inputs into outputs

3.7.9
performance
measurable result

Note 1 to entry: Performance can relate either to quantitative or qualitative findings.

Note 2 to entry: Performance can relate to the management of activities, *processes* (3.7.8), products (including services), systems or *organizations* (3.2.1).

3.7.10
outsource
make an arrangement where an external *organization* (3.2.1) performs part of an organization's function or *process* (3.7.8)

Note 1 to entry: An external organization is outside the scope of the *management system* (3.7.1), although the outsourced function or process is within the scope.

3.7.11
audit
systematic, independent and documented *process* (3.7.8) for obtaining evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the criteria are fulfilled

Note 1 to entry: An audit can be an internal audit (first party) or an external audit (second party or third party), and it can be a combined audit (combining two or more disciplines).

Note 2 to entry: An internal audit is conducted by the *organization* (3.2.1) itself or by an external party on its behalf.

3.7.12
conformity
fulfilment of a *requirement* (3.7.2)

3.7.13
nonconformity
non-fulfilment of a *requirement* ([3.7.2](#))

3.7.14
corrective action
action to eliminate the cause of a *nonconformity* ([3.7.13](#)) and to prevent recurrence

3.7.15
continual improvement
recurring activity to enhance *performance* ([3.7.9](#))

3.7.16
social responsibility
responsibility of an *organization* ([3.2.1](#)) for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behaviour that:

— contributes to sustainable development, including health and the welfare of society;

— takes into account the expectations of *'A' interested parties* ([3.2.17](#));

— is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behaviour; and

— is integrated throughout the organization and practised in its relationships

Note 1 to entry: Activities include products, services and *processes* ([3.7.8](#)).

Note 2 to entry: Relationships refers to an organization's activities within its sphere of influence.

3.7.17
vision
aspirations of an *organization* ([3.2.1](#)) in relation to its desired future condition and duly aligned with its *mission* ([3.7.18](#))

3.7.18
mission
reason for being, mandate and scope of an *organization* ([3.2.1](#)), translated into the context in which it operates

3.7.19
strategy
plan to accomplish the *organization's* ([3.2.1](#)) *mission* ([3.7.18](#)) and achieve the organization's *vision* ([3.7.17](#))

3.7.20
usability
extent to which a product, service, environment or facility can be used by specified users to achieve specified goals with *effectiveness* ([3.7.4](#)), efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use

3.7.21
accessibility
usability ([3.7.20](#)) of a product, service, environment or facility by people within the widest range of capabilities

3.7.22
verification
confirmation, through the provision of objective evidence, that specified requirements have been fulfilled

3.7.23
validation
confirmation, through the provision of objective evidence, that the requirements for a specific intended use or application have been fulfilled

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[7]   ISO 29992, *Assessment of outcomes of learning services — Guidance*

[8]   ISO 29993, *Learning services outside formal education — Service requirements*

[9]   ISO 29994, *Education and learning services — Requirements for distance learning*

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