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**Process Evaluation**

Process evaluations usually occur midway through a course or program. The purpose is to make sure that the course is maintaining standards of performance and that it is meeting the needs and expectations of the participants. The process evaluation is designed to help instructors and tutors improve the course while it is being conducted and to simultaneously help course designers improve the course for future learners.

Similar to design evaluation, the criteria for process evaluation emerge from how well the course addresses the challenges of attrition, quality, and cost while it is being conducted. Criteria that might be used for the formative evaluation of a course are usually focused on the main challenges to open and distance learning and may consist of the following:

✓ **Challenge 1: Attrition. Is the course holding learners' interest and keeping them motivated?**

- Are learners engaged and interacting with the course materials? What materials and activities are most useful to learners?
- Are learners participating in and evaluating school-based activities?
- Are the course requirements flexible enough for learners to accommodate work and family responsibilities?
- Are the learners in a study group, and do they attend tutorials regularly? Have the learners made contact with other professionals in their field?

✓ **Challenge 2: Quality. Is the course meeting the learners' or the evaluators' expected standards of teaching and content?**

- Is the course of consistently high quality?
- Do learners feel that the course materials are current? Are they learning new concepts and ideas relevant to their work?
- Are the materials, activities, and assignments effective for the learners?
- Are school-based activities relevant to learners' settings? Are they affecting ongoing classroom practices?

✓ **Challenge 3: Cost. Is the course cost-effective, both for the learners and for the program?**

- How many learners are enrolled in the course?
- How many, if any, learners have dropped out of the course?
- Is the cost of the course within the budget? What are the cost overruns? Are there any areas for savings?