



ISO 29993

Briefing notes



Learning services outside formal education – Service requirements

What is ISO 29993?

ISO 29993 is a service standard that specifies a set of minimum requirements for learning services outside formal education. It has been developed to promote the understanding and awareness of learners and/or sponsors as to the quality, sequence and outputs of learning services outside formal education, and their informed decision on the purchase of such services. ISO 29993 is also aimed at helping learning service providers deliver the services that fulfil the needs of learners and/or sponsors.

Learning services outside formal education means learning services provided by private organizations or individuals other than established recognized formal systems of education such as elementary, secondary or higher education. They include all types of lifelong learning such as vocational training, in-company training (either outsourced or in-house). They also include learning services addressed to learners themselves, as well as their sponsors who purchase the services on behalf of the learners. The learning can be face-to-face, mediated by technology, or a blend of both.

In cases where the learning service provider is part of an organization that delivers products (i.e. goods and services) in addition to learning services, ISO 29993 applies only to the learning services.

Why is ISO 29993 important ?

A globalized and fast-changing knowledge-based economy requires people to continue acquiring new skills and knowledge for their entire professional and private lives. The formal education system plays an important role in a country's human resources development. However, it is not always effective and sufficient in terms of meeting the rapidly evolving needs of individuals and societies. Private providers of learning services have more flexibility to respond quickly to such needs. In addition, as the cross-border mobility of employment increases in the global economy, more and more private providers are expanding their international presence and providing learning services to learners beyond their national borders. ISO 29993 is intended to provide such private providers with a generic frame of reference for quality learning services.

What are the key benefits of adopting ISO 29993 ?

The primary beneficiaries of ISO 29993 are learning service providers. The International Standard is intended to:

- Align various elements of learning services, including advertising, information provided to learners, needs analysis, design, assessment and evaluation, for the purpose of improving the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of learning services
- Enhance the credibility of learning services
- Provide a model for improving learning services that can be shared within an organization
- Provide an internationally recognized instrument that demonstrates the reliability and quality of learning services

ISO 29993 is also beneficial to learners (and/or their sponsors). It is particularly worth noting that the standard acknowledges the importance of the learner's informed decision on the acquisition of learning services by specifying requirements on the information to be provided to learners (and/or their sponsors). Compliance with ISO 29993 can help learners select learning services that are appropriate to their goals and purposes.

Who developed ISO 29993 ?

ISO 29993 was developed by the ISO technical committee for learning services outside formal education (ISO/TC 232). The committee consists of cross-sectoral experts and delegations from 16 national standardization bodies, who bring a wealth of international experience and expertise to the standards being developed.

More information at: www.iso.org/committee/537864.html

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