

Ryerson University

GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF DIGITAL LEARNING RESOURCES (DLR)

Background

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) regulates fees that universities charge, including fees in addition to tuition which are governed through the MTCU ancillary fees protocol.

MTCU guidelines now permit charging fees for digital learning resources (DLR), which may include assessment tools. DLR encompasses materials that aid or facilitate instruction, learning and assessment, and also associated devices (e.g., clickers, remote response devices). DLR may be in the form of physical/digital media or via access codes by which to obtain online access.

In requiring students to purchase digital learning materials, academic programs and instructors should have regard to the overall cost of these resources for the course and endeavour to keep them at an affordable level for students. Instructors should endeavour to have options available for students for whom the cost of such resources would cause undue hardship.

The following should be considered when making decisions about using digital learning resources in courses:

Guidelines

1. Instructors can require students to purchase access to digital learning resources, including e-textbooks, simulations, software, assessments, and associated devices (e.g., clickers, remote response devices) for the duration of the course.
2. If the digital learning resources include assessment tools, instructors may use these tools to assess student performance provided that their use does not form a substantial part of the overall assessment. The proportion of the course grade determined by such assessment tools should not exceed 25%.
3. If the digital learning resources have been bundled with a print textbook, to which students might have access by other means, an option to purchase access to the digital learning resources component alone should be supplied. In such instances, students cannot be required to purchase the print textbook component.
4. The cost of digital learning resources will be reflected in the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) cost codes associated with each academic program, maintained by the Student Financial Assistance Office based on information updated annually by program departments, and used in student financial aid calculations for each program.