

Frequently asked questions

At Pearson, we partner with 35 institutions and speak with Deans at many more. So we've compiled the questions we hear most often to help you find the right partner and your best path forward.



Why Pearson Online Learning Services?

Pearson Online Learning Services is the pioneer in the marketing, recruitment, and retention categories of online learning. We've spent two decades building and perfecting these services and have developed an impressive infrastructure and staff.



What does a partnership with Pearson Online Learning Services look like?

A partnership with Pearson is an open relationship built on trust, where transparency is key. It's a learning opportunity for both sides, working together to meet your institutional goals, from helping you envision a starting point, to identifying and implementing what's coming down the road in the future.

Using data as our driving point, we provide informed solutions backed by research and experience. At the same time, we don't get so lost in the numbers that we lose the human side of it. Our ideal partners are committed to maintaining high academic standards and are entrepreneurial in terms of educational delivery. They recognize that success in the online learning arena means being flexible, market-driven, and performance-based.



How will I hold Pearson accountable? What if there are problems, or Pearson doesn't meet the recruitment and retention goals we've agreed on?

We work hard to avoid problems upfront, by making sure everyone's expectations are clear, establishing specific accountability metrics, and building cross-functional teams where our professionals work closely with their institutional peers towards shared goals.

Pearson responds quickly when problems arise, and we work collaboratively and vigorously towards solutions. If, however, our services ultimately don't perform to the performance criteria we've both agreed upon in advance, either side can terminate the partnership.



Can faculty members design their own courses, select their own textbooks, and maintain academic freedom?

Yes. The institution and its appointed representatives are responsible for the academic integrity of the program. Your regional and professional accrediting bodies determine the academic standards of all programs, including online programs. Faculty are responsible for creating the course curriculum, selecting materials, designing learning activities, and assessing student learning. Pearson Online Learning Services can support faculty in the instructional design of the course, selection of appropriate technologies and multimedia, and of course, websites.



Who builds and maintains the online classroom?

If the institution does not have dedicated instructional design and technology support for faculty, we can provide this service. We have a team of instructional designers and technologists who are well-versed in online pedagogies. They will work closely with faculty members to design, develop, and deploy online courses. We provide on-demand design and technology consultation as well as personalized training in managing the virtual classroom.





Who hires and manages faculty?

The institution maintains full responsibility for selecting and managing qualified faculty. In instances where the program grows quickly and/or the institution does not have the administrative capacity to handle this function on their own, Pearson Online Learning Services will, upon request, find, train, manage faculty and act as your fiscal agent. We do so only in close collaboration with your institution, using your recommended qualifications and other standards you deem critical. Anyone hired to instruct or facilitate should hold at least an adjunct appointment to the institution.



How do institutions retain academic control?

Your institution plans and administers the educational experience. We faithfully represent and support that educational experience. The same academic policies and controls that govern on campus programs generally apply to online learning programs. Our personnel become well-acquainted with your institution's policies and work closely with your institution's student services departments to be consistent in representing them to prospective and current students. Pearson will provide suggestions based on our best practices which may help improve a program's competitiveness, but ultimately all academic decisions reside with the university.



How do university staff interact with Pearson Online Learning Services?

We work closely with individuals across your institution to seamlessly integrate processes. Our staff see themselves as an extension of your staff, and they represent themselves that way to students. They immerse themselves in your institution's processes, policies, and culture. In fact, at launch we bring the entire program team to your campus to begin that immersion process and build long-lasting relationships.



Who determines where and to whom Pearson Online Learning Services markets?

The extensive research we perform prior to signing a partnership agreement includes information on how best to reach the target audience. Our Partnership Director and Marketing Manager create a marketing plan at launch. They then collaborate with the program administrators at your institution to finalize and implement the plan. All marketing initiatives and materials are approved by your institution before being launched to prospective students.

Each week we update university program staff about our progress and enrollment prospects. Each term the Partnership Director and Marketing Manager create a new marketing plan based on performance data from the previous term and share this with your institution. It is an ongoing, collaborative process.



How are students oriented and supported?

Student support begins at the first contact with the prospective student and ends when he or she graduates from the program. Our recruitment and retention counselors are in regular contact with individual students to answer questions, provide information, and counsel them on what it takes to be successful as a distance learning student. They orient students to the program and assist them with administrative details and paperwork.



How do I get more information?

That's easy. **Contact us** for more information or to request a free consultation. We also encourage you to visit [pearson.com/opm](https://www.pearson.com/opm), review our partner case studies, and download our new white paper: [*Build or Buy: Key considerations for strategic, successful online growth.*](#)

Today's increasingly competitive landscape requires a strategic approach to successfully reach more of the right students where they are. Partnering with Pearson can help you accelerate strategic change while reducing the risks associated with growing your online presence. Our online program management services and community can help your students thrive as you build the brand and reputation you're striving for.

Dare to change.

Digital learning removes limits and gives us the freedom to provide education anytime and anywhere, empowering us to overcome our most difficult challenges.

