
Using the Critical Incident Questionnaire Online

This planning guide offers suggestions for implementing Brookfield's Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ) in your online course. In a face-to-face course, you would assign a CIQ at the end of a single class session or the end of a week to prompt students to reflect on their learning. In online courses, the CIQ is used to prompt learners to reflect on a week-long module or a unit. Here are recommendations for your online CIQ:

1. Create a discussion forum or anonymous online survey for the CIQ.

Brookfield's CIQ involves students responding to questions anonymously to ensure students offer their honest appraisal of the learning opportunities presented by the instructor. Some learning management systems (LMSs) have a discussion board option that allows for anonymous posting. If your LMS does not have this option, you can create an online survey using SurveyMonkey or Qualtrics that will allow you to collect anonymous responses.

In addition, if it is commonplace in your course for students to give and receive feedback in an open and respectful manner, ask the CIQ questions in a group discussion.

2. Provide instructions to students.

The purpose of the CIQ activity is twofold. First, it helps students to reflect on and begin to understand the types of learning activities and interactions that are most and least effective for them. Second, it helps you to learn which activities and assignments are most effective and the types of facilitation that are most beneficial for learning.

For each of the following questions, ask students to respond thoughtfully and honestly to the discussion board or online survey. Encourage students to send you an email or visit you during your virtual office hours if there is something they would like to share privately. For a week's module, ask students to answer the following questions:

- Which activity, assignment, or topic was most engaging for you? When did you feel most excited about what you were learning?
- Which activity or topic was the least engaging for you? When did you feel the least excited about what you were learning?
- What action that anyone (instructor or student) took did you find most affirming or helpful?
- What action that anyone (instructor or student) took did you find most puzzling or confusing?
- What surprised you most about the class discussions, reactions, or topics covered in the coursework?

3. Incorporate students' feedback.

Summarize the students' feedback about what is working and not working well for them, clarify areas of confusion where needed, and, most importantly, let the students know what you will do to integrate their feedback into the course moving forward. The process of reflecting on and integrating feedback models self-directed learning.