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# EDUCATIONAL WEBSITE EVALUATION

IDE 641| TECHNIQUES IN EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

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## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has made the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) iBT Home Edition a better choice for test takers who are unable to take the exam in traditional testing centers. Likewise, online TOEFL prep courses have become more varied and beneficial to students with different schedules and learning styles, so it is important to choose a prep course that fits individual's goals and schedule.

The TOEFL Test Preparation course by edX has video lectures, discussion forums, weekly quizzes, practice tests and recommended readings. It is free of charge for the audit option that has 4 sections (reading, listening, speaking, writing) which takes 6 weeks to complete, spending 2 to 4 hours per week. Each section focuses on learning question types and test preparation strategies. By the end of the course, learners should learn how to register for the test, how the test is scored, and how to use test scores for employment, school, visas, and scholarships. The participants in this course will acquire the following skills and knowledge in reading, listening, speaking, and writing sections of the actual test. The free TOEFL iBT Speaking Course offered on Udemy has 23 lectures lasting 3 video hours. This course first introduces the learner to strategies and tactics for the speaking portion of the test. It then explains the question types and provides information on how to prepare. In the videos, experts explain the application of the tactics and strategies. By the end of the course, learners should understand the grading requirements, learn the four possible templates for questions, understand how to organize their responses, learn the difference between good and great answers and know how to avoid low score errors. It aims to provide learners with practical tips and test taking strategies that will help them earn a score of 26 or higher on the speaking portion of the TOEFL iBT.

Both websites offer this prep course for students planning to study at an institution or university, candidates for scholarships and professional certification, students/workers who are applying for visas in certain countries, and English language learners who want to track their progress. Although Udemy only offers the speaking section of the test, both provide test prep resources for the TOEFL test.

**Website 1: edX**

Link: [TOEFL® Test Preparation: The Insider's Guide | edX](#)

Region: United States

Theme: Test preparation

Audience: English language learners preparing for the reading, listening, speaking, and writing portion of the TOEFL iBT exam.



**Description**

edX is a non-profit, American massive open online course (MOOC) provider founded by Harvard and MIT. It offers free online courses from top schools and institutions, with optional paid certificates. The courses are generally made up of weekly modules with pre-recorded videos that learners can watch on a schedule or at their own pace. There are supplemental readings and student forums, as well as homework assignments and assessments like short quizzes or exams. The audit option is free and lets viewers review the course materials and discussion forums, but it will not include graded assignments or unlimited course access. The certificate program comes with a fee that ranges from \$50 to \$300. The users can try the free (audit) version first before upgrading to the verified track plan for instructor feedback and valuable insider tips and ETS instructor support.

**Website 2: Udemy**

Link: [TOEFL iBT Free Speaking Course Section \(26+\) | Udemy](#)

Region: United States

Theme: Test preparation

Audience: English language learners preparing for the speaking portion of the TOEFL iBT exam.



**Description**

Udemy is an online learning and teaching marketplace which offers over 213,000 courses and serves over 57 million students. Udemy allows anyone anywhere to post online courses and it is not rated or accredited but can be a good source for professional development. The online courses are organized into modules and lessons that consist of videos, text notes and assessments. While the courses themselves cannot be downloaded for offline viewing, Udemy is available as a mobile app. It is also available through Apple TV and Google Chromecast. Udemy courses do not offer mentorship or specialized certificates. There are over 628 search results for “Toefl” with courses ranging from free to \$124.99. The free TOEFL course evaluated on Udemy is limited in what it offers. There are more courses that offer a more comprehensive learning experience, however there is a fee associated with them.

## Website 1: edX

### Educational Websites Evaluation Instrument

Harmon & Reeves – Copyright 1998

**Directions:** This instrument is meant to be used by teachers (preservice or in-service) to evaluate Websites that they might use for teaching and learning purposes with their students. Read the questions and sub-questions carefully before reviewing a site. After spending time with the site, go back through each question and rate it, using the five-point scale. Sub-questions are intended to help in thinking about the major questions.

#### 1. The information on this site is accurate.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Does the information appear consistent with what you already know about the topic?
- Does the site provide evidence that it comes from reputable sources?
- Does the site contain any obvious biases, or is it maintained by an organization likely to have strong biases?
- Does the site contain advertising that might limit the nature of the content?
- Are there any typographical or spelling errors that could potentially cause the information at this site to be misunderstood?
- Has the content been validated by a highly reputable source?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- Basic and essential information such as the overall format of the test and the purpose and uses of taking the test are provided and explained clearly.
- It has a section where a video features University Admissions Staff officers on what they are looking for in their applicants and some advice. The admissions officers are from the USA, the UK, Australia, and Canada.
- There are no outside advertisements. The only advertisement they have on the right side of the webpage is the offer to upgrade the account to become a verified user. Since I am only auditing this course, I am unable to participate and complete graded quiz and assignments, as part of this course, and get the verified certificate. A weighted if acquired the 75% passing grade.

- It was founded by scientists from MIT and Harvard and has connections with universities across the globe, so there is no doubt that it is a legitimate company. It has a 4.5-star rating on TrustPilot, and 75% of students left 5-star reviews.

## 2. The information on this site is current.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- a. Is the information subject to change or is the content stable?
- b. If subject to change, when was the site last updated? Does the information appear up to date?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- Enhanced transcripts are provided in each video, which proves that updates have been implemented regularly.
- It indicated that it was last updated on May 17, 2022

## 3. The information on this site is sufficient in scope.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- a. Does this site contain sufficient breadth and depth of information related to your needs?
- b. Does this site contain sufficient breadth and depth of information related to the topics it claims to cover?
- c. Does this site provide interactive learning opportunities?
- d. Does this site provide detailed information on the nature and format of the test?
- e. Does this site teach test-taking strategies to help learners better their performance in each skill?
- f. Does this site give practice tests so participants can readily practice the skills they have learned and measure their improvement?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- The course includes video lectures, discussion forums, weekly quizzes, practice tests and recommended readings that I would find extremely helpful if I were to take the test *again*.

- There is an in-depth look at all four sections of the TOEFL test: Reading, Listening, Speaking and Writing. Learners will have the chance to learn more about the question types, scoring guidelines, and resources to help them prepare for test day and test preparation tips and practice materials.
- You can participate in course discussions, connect with other students, and ask members of the course team questions. I really like this feature as it gives me a sense of community.

**4. The level of information on this site is appropriate for the learners taking the test.**

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- a. Does this site contain information appropriate for the learners with respect to test taking abilities?
- b. Does this site contain information appropriate for the learners with respect to their cognitive abilities?
- c. Does this site contain information appropriate for the learners with respect to their English proficiency?
- d. Is the site available in other languages for learning the specific course?

**5. The information on this site is presented clearly.**

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- a. Is the information arranged in an orderly fashion?
- b. Is the information presented clearly?
- c. Does the presentation of information let learners quickly scan and comprehend its content?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

**6. Navigation on this site is user-friendly.**

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- a. How easy is it to find information on this site?
- b. How easy is it to move around on this site without getting lost?
- c. Does the site provide multiple ways of accessing the same information (e.g., does the site have a built-in search capability or other accessibility features)?
- d. Does the site accommodate and accessible to learners with disabilities/special needs?
- e. Does it provide tutorials for navigating the site and understanding its functionality?

<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>N/A</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

Additional comments:

- I remember when I first visited the main page of edX, my very first impression was that I had just entered a university website. This is what they were going for, seeing that they offer “professional, university-level courses.”
- I liked the page. It is short and simple, contains only the necessary features and avoids any trivial information or annoying popups. I could immediately see the sections of all the different courses to choose from, the search bar, the partner list, everything right in front of me! If a visitor does not need to wander around the website looking for something essential, that is a good sign.
- Once you enter a course page, you are greeted with all the general information that you would expect - a brief description, an introductory video, the main information (course length, price, language, etc.).
- Although it provided information on how ETS is committed to serving learners with disabilities or health-related needs by providing reasonable accommodations that are appropriate given the purpose of the test, it is, unfortunately, not a feature in edX.

## 7. Media is integrated effectively in this site.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Does the site make effective use of graphics? Audio? Animation? Video?
- Is the media used effectively in conveying the content?
- Is the information on the site enhanced by the media in it?
- Is the course available in another format (iOS or Android)?

<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>N/A</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

Additional comments:

## 8. This site provides maps that clarify the site contents.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Does the site provide a clear overview of what it does contain?
- Is it obvious what the site does not contain?
- Does the site contain a map or table of contents that allows you to see what you have seen and not seen?



Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- It has course handouts containing syllabus in the menu bar. The syllabus has an overview of the course, learning objectives, and weekly topics. The information is also presented at the beginning of the course.
- The contents and resources are all provided on the site, no matter which section the learners are in the course.
- The menu bar has 'Progress' bar that contains course completion in a form of percentage. This represents how much of the course content you have completed. For verified users, there is a grading bar that represents the weighted grade against the grade needed for this course (i.e., 75%) and grade summary that lists all the completed assignments, quiz, videos, and other course materials, as well as the things that are not yet completed. Also, there is a message that will pop up every time you log in and access the course to pick up where you left off.

## 9. This site exemplifies good web design.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Is it obvious how to interact with this site?
- If needed, does the site contain a useful help section?
- Are all the possible interactions on a page obvious?
- Is the page aesthetically appealing?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- The help bar is on the top right of the webpage next to the account. Learners can choose either using the search bar for the learning help center to get course help, login issues, and apply for financial assistance or by clicking the Account Basics, Course, Payments and Refunds, Certificates, Programs, FAQ (Frequently Asked Question), etc., and some promoted articles. Also, if learners need further assistance, they may submit a request to our support team on the article or search pages.
- The Discussion Forums are available in each course unit on the top menu bar. Each week there will be one or more discussion threads. Learners can use the weekly discussion

forum to ask questions, discuss content and submit assignments as directed. The instructors and staff will moderate the discussions and provide feedback where possible. This is also a way to interact with other users who are also currently taking the course all over the world.

**10. This site is a reliable source of information.**

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- How often is the site down when you try to access it?
- How long does it take for the pages of the site to come up at the time of day you will use it?
- Is the site likely to remain on the Web?
- Is the website accredited?
- Are the course materials or the course itself worth it?
- Is the certificate (if there are any) worth the money?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- I have not experienced anything during the 1 week of accessing the website. Also, I used this website in taking another course a year ago and there were no instances where the site could not be accessed.
- Most courses do not award academic credit. However, there are some credit-eligible courses that allow you to purchase academic credit and apply it toward a university degree. If you want to get credit, you need to enroll in the verified track and meet all the course requirements. After that, you will have one year to purchase credit on edX. edX master's programs are fully accredited.
- If you enroll in the verified track, you will get access to all course materials even after the course ends. However, if you enroll in the audit track, you will get access only for the number of weeks listed on the course enrollment page. edX offers over 2,500 courses covering a variety of subjects and does not require specific prerequisites, but some are more advanced than others.

**11. The constraints of this site do not outweigh its value.**

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Does the site require extensions that must be downloaded and may present difficulties?
- Does the site require one specific browser (e.g., Netscape Communicator or Internet Explorer)?
- Does the site require hardware features that you may not have (e.g., sound card)?
- Does the site contain features that require specific systems software (e.g., Windows '95)?

- e. Are any fees associated with using the site?  
f. If costs are involved, can site licenses be obtained?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- According to edX, some organizations and educational institutions may offer credit based on the verified certificate, so in this case, it is worth it. You can also add an edX certificate to your resume to show your expertise and attract potential employers. To earn a verified certificate, you need to get a passing grade and verify your identity using your photo ID and a webcam. edX certificate does not show your grades, it merely indicates that you completed the course with a passing grade. Some certificates may also show the "Hours of Effort".

## 12. This site protects the confidentiality of the user.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- a. Does the site require you to submit information about yourself or your school before granting access? If so, what does it do with this information?  
b. Does the site require "cookies" or other information about your system?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- Yes, it is noted and explained in the edX Cookie Policy, cookies and similar tracking technologies are used to help track activity on the edX website and in courses. These Cookies are essential in helping you to move around the site and use the features, such as accessing secure areas of the site or using the shopping basket.
- The website works with several service providers that help run the website and carry out daily business activities, as further described under the "How edX Shares Your Personal Information" section of the edX Privacy Policy. For a list of some key vendors that process learner data, their list is maintained at the edX Help Center page for Service Provider FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions).

**13. This site provides instructors and/or administrators who can monitor discussions and inquiries any time by the learners.**

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- a. Is this site regularly monitored by an administrator or an instructor?
- b. Are the solutions provided when there are unclear questions for exercises or issues with the course materials?

<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>N/A</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

Additional comments:

**14. This site provides additional features to support learners in watching the videos, given that English is not their native language.**

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- a. Does the site provide transcripts?
- a. Does the site provide discussion boards for learners to ask clarifying questions about the videos/lessons?
- b. Can the learners control (increase/decrease) the playback speed of course videos?

<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>N/A</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

Additional comments:

## Website 2: Udemy

### Educational Websites Evaluation Instrument

Harmon & Reeves – Copyright 1998

**Directions:** This instrument is meant to be used by teachers (preservice or in-service) to evaluate Websites that they might use for teaching and learning purposes with their students. Read the questions and sub-questions carefully before reviewing a site. After spending time with the site, go back through each question and rate it, using the five-point scale. Sub-questions are intended to help in thinking about the major questions.

#### 1. The information on this site is accurate.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Does the information appear consistent with what you already know about the topic?
- Does the site provide evidence that it comes from reputable sources?
- Does the site contain any obvious biases, or is it maintained by an organization likely to have strong biases?
- Does the site contain advertising that might limit the nature of the content?
- Are there any typographical or spelling errors that could potentially cause the information at this site to be misunderstood?
- Has the content been validated by a highly reputable source?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- The information provided to the students is accurate. It informs the student of the format and expectations of the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) iBT test.
- This site states that the instructor is reputable. Further online searches support Keino Campbell, who is said to be a specialist in this area. However, Udemy allows anyone, anywhere to record and post video courses on their site, even those with minimal experience.
- “Udemy courses are video-based experiences that give students the chance to learn actionable skills. *Whether you have experience teaching, or it is your first time, we will help you package your knowledge into an online course that improves student lives.*” Potential instructors just need to answer 3 questions before recording content to post.
- The instructor on this course offers advice based on his opinion. This advice is not related to criteria contained in the rubric used to score a test-taker on the speaking portion of the

TOEFL. For example, he makes statements such as, “A confident speaker will score better.”

- This course on Udemy does not have distracting advertisements that would limit the nature of the content.
- The course does contain typographical errors that may lead a potential user to doubt the attention to detail and professionalism of this course.
- While the course claims that its instructors are professionals in this area, there is no documentation to support it.

## 2. The information on this site is current.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Is the information subject to change or is the content stable?
- If subject to change, when was the site last updated? Does the information appear up to date?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- The information on this course is subject to change, however, it does seem stable.
- The course information was last updated in August 2019 to reflect the revised TOEFL exam. The information on the site could benefit from some updated information. The last announcement made by the instructor was 2 years ago.

## 3. The information on this site is sufficient in scope.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Does this site contain sufficient breadth and depth of information related to your needs?
- Does this site contain sufficient breadth and depth of information related to the topics it claims to cover?
- Does this site provide interactive learning opportunities?
- Does this site provide detailed information on the nature and format of the test?
- Does this site teach test-taking strategies to help learners better their performance in each skill?
- Does this site give practice tests so participants can readily practice the skills they’ve learned and measure their improvement?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- This site does not contain sufficient breadth and depth of information related to a student's needs. The TOEFL iBT exam contains four parts: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. This site only provides support for the speaking portion. There is a more complete paid version that contains information on all parts of the speaking test.
  - To connect to the full TOEFL course, learners can search for: TOEFL iBT Complete Online Preparation Course by Keino Campbell.
- The site does not provide sufficient information related to the topics it claims to cover. The speaking portion of the TOEFL iBT exam consists of 4 questions: personal opinion, campus announcements, academic text/academic lecture, academic question. This site only provides instruction and support for 2 of the 4 types of questions.
- The average user rating is 4.1 out of 5. The site received low scores because it was incomplete and did not address all portions of the speaking test.
- The site does provide test taking strategies; however, it does not give the reader the opportunity to take practice tests.

#### 4. The level of information in this site is appropriate for the learners taking the test.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- a. Does the site contain information appropriate for the learners with respect to test taking abilities?
- b. Does the site contain information appropriate for the learners with respect to their cognitive abilities?
- c. Does the site contain information appropriate for the learners with respect to their English proficiency?
- d. Is the site available in other languages for learning the specific course?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree 1	Strongly Agree 2
N/A	-2	-1	0		

Additional comments:

- This site provides the learner with key details about the test and helpful tips and strategies.
- This site does not offer modifications for learners with lower cognitive abilities.
- This site specifies the course is recommended for “intermediate” level English language learners.
- This site includes links to websites that offer support with pronunciation.
- This course is delivered in English only and is designed to help learners perform well on the TOEFL iBT.

### 5. The information in this site is presented clearly.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Is the information arranged in an orderly fashion?
- Is the information presented clearly?
- Does the presentation of information let learners quickly scan and comprehend its content?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- The information is presented in an orderly fashion. The course content is broken down into 4 sections: Introduction, Strategies and Tips, Personal Opinion Question, and Campus Announcement Question. Each section has multiple subsections that are logically named.
- The information is clearly presented and at a level that makes it easy to understand. The instructor gives relevant examples to help the learner better understand the content.
- The learner can easily navigate to a desired video based on the way the lessons are numbered and named in the course content tab.

### 6. Navigation on this site is user-friendly.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- How easy is it to find information on this site?
- How easy is it to move around on this site without getting lost?
- Does the site provide multiple ways of accessing the same information (e.g., does the site have a built-in search capability or other accessibility features)?
- Does the site accommodate and accessible to learners with disabilities/special needs?
- Does it provide tutorials for navigating the site and understanding its functionality?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- It is easy to find information on this site.
- Most of the information needed is contained in the first tab titled, "Course Content."
- There is a built-in search bar next to the first tab.
- Going back to locate a specific visual can be challenging as they are all embedded within video tutorials in different sections.



- The site offers the learner the option of using captions to support the spoken parts of the course. It also allows the learner to adjust the playback rate. This is helpful because the course is designed for English language learners.
- There are arrows on the side of each video that allow the learner to move between tutorials within each section.
- The site does accommodate learners with specific needs. There is a transcript option so the learner can read the information rather than just listen to the tutorials.

## 7. Media is integrated effectively in this site.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Does the site make effective use of graphics? Audio? Animation? Video?
- Is the media used effectively in conveying the content?
- Is the information on the site enhanced by the media in it?
- Is the course available in another format (iOS or Android)?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- This site makes effective use of graphics, audio, animation, and video; however, they are all embedded in the video tutorials and not available as separate resources.
- The graphics used provide the learner with helpful visuals to support their learning.
- Use of high-quality graphics and engaging videos enhances the learning experience.
- This course is available as an app for iOS and Android users.

## 8. This site provides maps that clarify the site contents.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Does the site provide a clear overview of what it does contain?
- Is it obvious what the site does not contain?
- Does the site contain a map or table of contents that allows you to see what you have seen and not seen?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- The site provides a clear overview of the course, and the tabs are intended to indicate what is contained on the site.

- The site does not indicate that there is no support provided for two of the four questions on the speaking portion of the TOEFL. The site also has a tab titled, “Learning Tools,” however it merely offers the option of setting up reminders to study. Links to other sites or printable practice materials or visuals would be helpful.
- The site does track a student’s progress by indicating which video lessons have been viewed. Additionally, each video resumes where the learner left off.
- The running time for each video is posted.

## 9. This site exemplifies good web design.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Is it obvious how to interact with this site?
- If needed, does the site contain a useful help section?
- Are all the possible interactions on a page obvious?
- Is the page aesthetically appealing?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- The site is very straightforward. The learner needs to move through the predetermined sequence of the video tutorials.
- There is no “help” section.
- All interactions on the page are obvious. A learner can watch the videos, make “notes” related to specific sections or lessons.
- The site is not especially aesthetically appealing. It is basic.

## 10. This site is a reliable source of information.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- How often is the site down when you try to access it?
- How long does it take for the pages of the site to come up at the time of day you will use it?
- Is the site likely to remain on the Web?
- Is the website accredited?
- Are the course materials or the course itself worth it?
- Is the certificate (if there are any) worth the money?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- The site was not down any of the times we reviewed it. Only one reviewer commented that the videos for a specific lesson could not be downloaded.
- The videos load quickly, and no glitches have been experienced.
- This course is likely to remain on the Udemy site. To date, 27, 679 students have accessed this course.

### 11. The constraints of this site do not outweigh its value.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Does the site require extensions that must be downloaded and may present difficulties?
- Does the site require one specific browser (e.g., Netscape Communicator or Internet Explorer)?
- Does the site require hardware features that you may not have (e.g., sound card)?
- Does the site contain features that require specific systems software (e.g., Windows '95)?
- Are any fees associated with using the site?
- If costs are involved, can site licenses be obtained?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- This course on Udemy recommends that users have access to or download a speech to text extension to review their spoken words. This is for picking up errors in grammar or pronunciation.
- The site does not require the learner to use a specific browser, hardware, or software.
- This course on Udemy is free, however there are other paid courses.
- This course is designed to help individual learners prepare to pass the TOEFL iBt exam.

### 12. This site protects the confidentiality of the user.

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- Does the site require you to submit information about yourself or your school before granting access? If so, what does it do with this information?
- Does the site require "cookies" or other information about your system?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- Udemy requires users to set up an account to access courses.

- Udemy does not collect or process sensitive or special category personal data.
- Udemy does not collect or store bank information.
- Udemy does not manage disputes between instructors and users.
- Udemy does use cookies to collect, store, and share data about a user's activities across websites, including on Udemy.

**13. This site provides instructors and/or administrators who can monitor discussions and inquiries any time by the learners.**

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- a. Is this site regularly monitored by an administrator or an instructor?
- b. Are the solutions provided when there are unclear questions for exercises or issues with the course materials?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- This free version of the TOEFL course does not appear to be monitored by an administrator or instructor. In fact, the last comment made by the instructor was posted over 2 years ago.

**14. This site provides additional features to support learners in watching the videos, given that English is not their native language.**

Sub-questions to ask yourself:

- a. Does the site provide transcripts?
- b. Does the site provide discussion boards for learners to ask clarifying questions about the videos/lessons?
- c. Can the learners control (increase/decrease) the playback speed of course videos?

Not Applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
N/A	-2	-1	0	1	2

Additional comments:

- Transcripts are available for this course. However, course content is not available to be downloaded for offline viewing. A learner may view the transcript while using the online materials via their computer, mobile device, Apple TV, or Google Chromecast.

## Modification of Rubric

A website evaluation rubric is used to measure the quality of a website based on several factors, and different rubrics may measure several factors. We modified the rubric by adding, deleting, and combining questions to better suit our needs in evaluating the chosen educational websites. It began by brainstorming to determine our need for the websites because using an educational website rubric for another purpose, such as a generic website that has nothing to do with English test prep course may yield incorrect and inaccurate results. We developed a list of criteria that assesses specific tasks in utilizing the website for test prep course. Effective rubrics offer a lot of descriptive language, so we added more sub-questions to address some criteria to describe exactly what makes an informative website that specifically caters TOEFL test takers. To ensure the effectiveness, we tried to check if the questions can be used by various evaluators to arrive at similar scores for a given type of educational website. It was challenging to construct questions that are measurable and answers that can be checked without the interference of personal feelings.

First, we added sub-questions to the following criteria:

**1. The information on this site is accurate.**

- e. Are there any typographical or spelling errors that could potentially cause the information at this site to be misunderstood?
- f. Has the content been validated by a highly reputable source?

**3. The information in this site is sufficient in scope.**

- c. Does this site provide interactive learning opportunities?
- d. Does this site provide detailed information on the nature and format of the test?
- e. Does this site teach test-taking strategies to help learners better their performance in each skill?
- f. Does this site give practice tests so participants can readily practice the skills they have learned and measure their improvement?

**5. The information on this site is presented clearly.**

- c. Does the presentation of information let learners quickly scan and comprehend its content?

**6. Navigation on this site is user-friendly.**

- d. Does the site accommodate and accessible to learners with disabilities/special needs?
- e. Does it provide tutorials for navigating the site and understanding its functionality?

**7. Media is integrated effectively in this site.**

- d. Is the course available in another format (iOS or Android)?

**10. This site is a reliable source of information.**

- d. Is the website accredited?
- e. Are the course materials or the course itself worth it?
- f. Is the certificate (if there are any) worth the money?

Second, we modified the questions contained in this criterion and added a sub-question (d):

**4. The level of information on this site is appropriate for the learners taking the test.**

- a. Does the site contain information appropriate for the learners with respect to test taking abilities?
- b. Does the site contain information appropriate for the learners with respect to them cognitive abilities?
- c. Does the site contain information appropriate for the learners with respect to them English proficiency?
- d. Is the site available in other languages for learning the specific course?

Finally, we added (2) two additional criteria and its sub-questions to fully assess the usability of the website in providing TOEFL test prep course.

**13. This site provides instructors and/or administrators who can monitor discussions and inquiries any time by the learners.**

- a. Is this site regularly monitored by an administrator or an instructor?
- b. Are the solutions provided when there are unclear questions for exercises or issues with the course materials?

**14. This site provides additional features to support learners in watching the videos, given that English is not their native language.**

- a. Does the site provide transcripts?
- b. Does the site provide discussion boards for learners to ask clarifying questions about the videos/lessons?
- c. Can learners control (increase/decrease) the playback speed of course videos?

To guarantee the instrument to be valid and reliable, our method is targeted to measure exactly what we want to know about the two educational websites, which both aim to help TOEFL test takers. The clarity of the language in each question is a matter of validity because an ambiguous question cannot be accurately or consistently interpreted by raters. So, the questions we added were carefully and precisely worded. The rating has clear descriptors to remove as much bias as possible, reducing the likelihood of varying results by multiple raters. Using the instrument provided serves as a starting point for development of more reliable questions. If descriptors are vague and too subjective, then the level of reliability varies. In an effort to check the face and content validity of the instrument, we added questions to make it more relevant to the website we are evaluating. We also modified some questions that have low values to improve its overall content validity. We added language skills related questions to the items that measure the level and scope of the information in the websites because the instrument should cover all aspects of the concept being measured. The questions are constructed in such a way that it's a good tool to measure both sites' accuracy, credibility etc.

## Evaluation Summary

### *Site Exploration Process*

Technology has played a key role in improving and expanding education worldwide. Websites are part of technology through which educational institutions can easily design and provide instructional materials with the rest of the world. So, the first question that came to mind is do learners and test takers have adequate technology competencies to operate online courses?

We have carefully selected TOEFL prep courses that are designed by TOEFL iBT experts and those with proven success in helping test takers achieve their target scores. The edX and Udemy websites were chosen because of their numerous good reviews in designing courses. Choosing websites for TOEFL test prep courses was a bit challenging at first because the Internet offers a lot of sites that offers sample test questions, but only a few offers test taking strategies and supplemental activities. Both sites offer a higher-score guarantee, demonstrating the quality of their services and the effectiveness of their study materials than other sites we quickly examined. We explored each site page by page and the kinds of data posted on it to see whether each website matches the criteria of the instrument we chose and modified to properly and effectively evaluate the courses offered. Also, the strengths and weaknesses of the websites were explored, and some suggestions or comments were added to each rubric for the improvement of each website. The relevance of the site's course content to the objectives of the actual TOEFL test conducted by ETS and its overall quality are our main concern in this evaluation process. The quality of the assessments used in the online course was also given attention.

An educational website should also improve social interaction and communication skills. We focused on the important website attributes that affect user's experience of the chosen site. A reliable website, in general, should be accessible, accurate, and appropriate. Usability or ease of use, content, design/appearance, functionality, and interactivity are the umbrella terms that encompassed the website attributes identified in the rubric.

### *Comparison Summary*

If we compare Udemy vs edX, it is evident that edX has higher value for the overall quality of content and learning materials. Since edX is the official prep course developed and delivered by the TOEFL iBT test creators, administrators, and scorers from Educational Testing Service (ETS), it is not surprising that it scored higher than Udemy. When it comes to free Audit Track plan, edX offers temporary access to video lessons, practice assessments, real (past) test materials, discussion forums, and edX support. While Udemy does not restrict access after a certain period, this free course does not include practice assessments, discussion forums, or instructional support. Learners simply have access to video lessons. As a result of this Website evaluation process, it became evident that taking time to compare websites is equally valuable as taking time evaluate a website or an app based on certain criteria. While a site may initially seem adequate, there may be other sites at comparable prices that have much more to offer.

*Comparison Chart*

Rubric	edX	Udemy
1. The information on this site is accurate.	2	0
2. The information on this site is current.	1	1
3. The information on this site is sufficient in scope.	2	-1
4. The level of information on this site is appropriate for the learners taking the test.	2	1
5. The information on this site is presented clearly.	2	1
6. Navigation on this site is user-friendly.	1	1
7. Media is integrated effectively in this site.	1	1
8. This site provides maps that clarify the site contents.	2	0
9. This site exemplifies good web design.	1	0
10. This site is a reliable source of information.	2	1
11. The constraints of this site do not outweigh its value.	1	1
12. This site protects the confidentiality of the user.	1	1
13. This site provides instructors and/or administrators who can monitor discussions and inquiries any time by the learners.	1	NA
14. This site provides additional features to support learners in watching the videos, given that English is not their native language.	2	1
<b>Total</b> (out of 28 points)	<b>21</b>	<b>8</b>

**Not Applicable** N/A   **Strong Disagree** -2   **Disagree** -1

**Undecided** 0   **Agree** 1   **Strongly Agree** 2



## Conclusion

It is best to think of evaluation not as an event, but as a process. The goal should be to provide an ongoing source of information that can aid decision making at various steps along the way (NSF, 2010). Well-designed, accessible web sites can expedite the delivery of information and services, so we added a sub-question that asks its accessibility to learners with disabilities. The site must be accessible to provide equal access and opportunity to people with diverse abilities. Since both chosen websites provide test prep courses, the instrument was used and modified to see whether the questions relate to and reflect the content of the websites, which is the knowledge and skills needed to successfully pass the actual TOEFL test. There are many factors to check to ensure the website is working for everyone, especially TOEFL test takers, at its optimal level. We hoped that this evaluation would serve as an effective tool to accurately measure these factors.

## References

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