QUALITY FRAMEWORK CHECKLISTS

Answers for the
Home based Care – Home based Education
project

1. Planning the course

2. Planning the tuition

3. Planning the content delivery

4. Communication with the learners before the course starts

5. Moderating the online learning environment

1.1 Purpose and frames of the online course

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	Three months before course starts

- **What is the overall rationale for this course?**

The rationale for the course was to use the existing face to face course but to shift it to an online environment. We knew there would be a demand for an online course and we used the face to face learning outcomes and learning exercises as the basis for the online delivery. We also got a grant from Erasmus+ to assist us in this process. We also were trying to address the gap were carers who could not to attend a face to face course, or course not available in their locality could now avail of the course online.

- **How will the result of this course bring value to the learners now and in the future?**

It will help them to improve their care skills and increase their knowledge of the range of dementia illnesses. It will also address issues of isolation. And learners will benefit from peer support and tutor expertise. It also gives information on how to access services which they can avail of long after the course ends.

- **How will the result of this course bring value the society now and in the future?**

It should help keep people with dementia living in their homes more comfortably for longer. That benefits society as it cuts down on the number of people with dementia needing care within the already overburdened health care system. It will also help with our dementia awareness and combating the stigma that may still exist in some areas.

- **How will this course bring enough value to the institution to be sustainable?**

We may look for sponsorship from a medical company to fund ongoing development after the project. Also, we are asking participants for voluntary donations. The ease, in which we have found filling the course without advertising it, shows there is a demand for online learning in this area.

- **What are the financial and other resources allocated/available to this course?**

This course is funded by Erasmus+. It is not easy to quantify the costs of course development. It is probably in the region of 60 hours. We also employ a tutor for 3.5 hours per week to facilitate the course through ongoing support of course participants. ASI has to pay an annual maintenance fee for Moodle hosting. This is approximately €4k per year.

- **What is the time frame for the course cycle?**

We started planning course delivery in October 2015. The course started in April 2016. So we had a six month lead in time. We used that time to plan the course and to finalise and test course structure.

The course itself is 6 weeks.

- **Are there policies that need to be taken into consideration?**

Confidentiality,

- Are there laws that need to be taken into consideration?

Data Protection, Copyright

- What is the launch date for the first/next cycle?

The launch date for the first course was 25th April 2016. We ran the course again starting on 12th September 2016. And our latest iteration of the course started on 7th November 2016.

Confidentiality,

- Are there laws that need to be taken into consideration?

Data Protection, Copyright

1.2 Describing the target group/learners

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	Three months before course starts

- Is the main learner an individual or a group (like a family)?

The course will be made up of family carers of a loved one with dementia. They will likely be a group of individuals. Participants are mostly a family member who is caring for or helping to care, for a relative. Sometimes we get siblings or mother / daughter (who both might be caring for husband / father) to come to one course together. This helps with the bedding in process, and makes people less overwhelmed with the thought of coming to the course.

- What age span will the learners cover? What experience will they bring to the group? How do they prefer to communicate?

The age span is likely to be fairly wide – probably from 40s through to 80s. They will bring life experiences, some experience of being able to provide care to their loved one. But they may also be confused and anxious about the situation they now find themselves in. They have not asked or volunteered to become carers. Rather, this situation has been forced onto them. They should be somewhat comfortable with online communication. This is because they have agreed to participate in an online course and they were provided with a set of Frequently Asked Questions before the course started.

The two mediums of communication on the course were, open forums and weekly live chats that lasted one hour. As with face to face courses, some participants are more comfortable speaking than others as is true of the forums/live chats.

- Where will the learners be located? Is there an option for them to communicate in real time, or meet face to face?

Learners will be based in their homes right around Ireland. We have accepted participants onto the course who lived in other countries but who will carry out family care in Ireland. There is an option for participants to communicate in real time through the Chat Feature. We hold a one hour Chat session every week at different times in an effort to attract as many participants as possible. There is no face to face meeting.

- What will be the learners' motivation for the course?

The learners' motivation will be to learn more about dementia, about how the disease progresses. Also to learn more about coping with the impact of the dementia on their own lives and on the lives of their loved one.

In the past two main issues carers find difficult is communication with their loved one who has dementia and behaviour issues. These are both addressed in the course which carers find very useful. Sometimes it is not till these issues become apparent that family members start looking for support.

- What prerequisites will the learners have for taking the course? On what level can we start, what progress can be expected?

In the FAQ document we state:

"You will need access to a Personal Computer, laptop or tablet. You will need to have an internet broadband connection. You will also need a set of speakers (most laptops and tablets have these) or headphones so that you can listen to videos from the course. You should be familiar with using the internet and as you may need to type in text you should be familiar with using the keyboard and mouse on your computer."

When we advertised on Facebook, we received enquires through email within minutes of the post going live on our Facebook page. This told us that participants were quite likely to have good IT skills and to be comfortable with social media.

- What abilities/disabilities will the students have that will influence their participation in the course?

The Moodle page will be fully tested for usability and accessibility before the final version of the course runs in April 2017. At the moment, the page is partially accessible. We have some 'Blocks' around Browser compatibility and Accessibility. The latter allows the user to change the size and colour of text. We have also included Transcripts for some but not all of the video lectures.

- What preferences will the learners have regarding learning- and teaching modes?

We believe that learners will prefer to communicate with each other about their situations. This peer support is helpful to them.

Also having direct contact to the tutor through email, allows questions/comments to be addressed privately.

- How will this information be collected? As requirements for enrolment, in the enrolment process or at the beginning of the course?

Requirements for enrolment will be supported by the course coordintor. Each participant will be sent joining instructions by email. This will contain a step-by-step guide to self-enrolment. The course administrator is also the Moodle Administrator. He/she will create an account for each participant with a Username and Password. The participant will have to change their password during the enrolment process to their own preferred one. Joining instructions will also contain picture still of screens visible during the process.

- Who is in charge of collecting information about the learners?

The Training Administrator is in charge of collecting information about the learners. We use a standard application form which asks for personal information, caring situation, where they heard about the course.

1.3 Learning outcomes and assessment

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	Three months before course starts

- What should the learner know, understand and be able to do upon the completion of this course?

We have a list of Learning Outcomes – available on a separate document. These Learning Outcomes are listed on the Moodle page under each course Topic. This allows the learner to view and understand what is contained in the learning materials and what they can expect to learn during the course.

- Are the learning outcomes achievable for the target group within the frames of the course?

We think the learning outcomes are achievable for the target group. But they need to participate in course activities to have a better chance of achieving the learning outcomes. Learners will be asked to self-assess their learning at the end of the course. This allows the course organisers to see if learning outcomes have been met.

Having the course available a year after it ends allows participants to revisit sections as issues may arise. Therefore learning is also ongoing.

- Will the learning outcomes be perceived as relevant to the target group?

Yes, we think they will. Prospective learners are given sight of a course leaflet which outlines the topics of the course. Some of these are very descriptive – for example: Nutrition and Eating Well; Safety in the Home; Assisting with Personal Care. Having seen the content learners could chose to opt out of the course as some do. Those who are offered and accept a place on the course have a very good idea of the course content.

Participants also have a chance to state what areas they may need support in on their application.

- Are the learning outcomes mainly objective or subjective?

They are a mixture of subjective and objective. Subjective as we ask learners to self-assess their own learning and development at the start and again at the end of the course. They are objective also as we ask learners to submit a 'care delivery action plan' which is a subjective activity. The objectivity part is when the tutor comments on the plan and feeds this back to the learner.

- Are the learning outcomes "active", i.e. do they tell what the learner should be *able to do* rather what she/he *has been doing/shown/told* during the course?

We use words like Describe, Outline, Understand, Explore, Identify and Discuss. So these words imply active learning.

- How and when will the learning outcomes be communicated to the learners?

They are communicated to learners at the start of each topic published at the top of the course page.

- How will the learning outcomes be assessed?

Self-assessment survey and weekly care delivery action plan. The tutor provides feedback on the plan

- Is the form of assessment aligned with the learning outcomes, learning activities and general tone of voice in the course?

Yes, it is certainly aligned to the learning activities and the general tone of the course which is welcoming and participative. There is also an encouragement for learners to share their experiences, tips and tricks. But also some space for learners to self-reflect on their own situations and how the course materials may support them to deliver 'better' care.

- Will there be issued some sort of certificate to the learners? If so, will it be based on the result of the assessment?

Learners will be provided with a certificate of attendance. Each learner gets the same certificate so no mention is made of how well they have done with assessments.

- How are the assessment criteria made clear to the learners?

Assessments are informal and optional – though learners are encouraged to complete the care delivery action plan. We feel that to stress 'assessments' can be off putting to learners. They are not expecting a formal assessed course. We have had feedback that the language used in the Care Delivery Action Plan is a little off putting and too formal. We need to work on this before the final version of the course.

- How and when is the planned assessment communicated to the learners?

During the induction week there is an introductory video which mentions how the course is delivered.

- Who is in charge of the assessment?

Prior to the course the Course Coordinator is in charge of assessment. During the course the course tutor interacts with and provides feedback to learners around uploaded assessments.

1.4 Content of the course

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager	
Last date for checking all the items:	One month before course starts	

- What subjects/topics need to be covered to achieve the learning outcomes? How and when will these be communicated to the learners?

The subjects / topics are listed in the course information leaflet which is available on our website. Learners see this information before they start the course. Interested individuals complete an application form and are then offered a place. Once they confirm the offer, we send them joining instructions. Normally two topics covered per week x 6 weeks.

- Is some of the content more suitable for special learning activities than other? E.g. are some topics more suitable for discussion, for reading about or for practical exercises?

Yes some topics are a little more practical e.g. Assisting with Personal Care. This topic contains some 'how to' videos. But there is always space to talk about and describe experiences, and the difficulties learners have had in delivering the practical elements of care.

Topics such as changing relationships and looking after your self are more subjective but as with all topics, literature relating to these are available e.g. through are fact sheets which we make available to participants on course.

- How will the learners perceive the content as relevant?

They will be able to identify with the topics e.g. Assisting with Personal Care, Looking After Yourself as a Carer and Safety at Home. Other topic names will also be of interest to them. The course takes into consideration the practical and emotional needs of the carer, while dealing with the care needs of the person with dementia. Feedback from face to face course have found content very relevant and have not suggested other topics that need to be covered.

1.5 Course evaluation

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	
Last date for checking all the items:	

- How will the institution evaluate the course?

-Effect and quality of the tuition: through evaluation forms completed by learners at the end of the course; also through course coordinator observation of interaction on forums and timeliness of responses to learners

-Effect and quality of the content: again through analysis of course evaluation forms, general learner feedback and participation rates in each activity.

-Effect and quality of the learning activities: as above

-Degree of alignment between course and learners' expectation: Learners are encouraged to fill in a survey after the course, and also feed back regualarly via the feedback tool in the Learning Platform.

- If learner activity data is part of the evaluations –is this communicated to the learners?
  No, as it might interfere and / or influence with learner activity.

- Who is in charge of evaluating the course?
The course coordinator.

- How will the institution use the information to improve quality?
  By feeding back practical and consistent suggestions for change improvement.

  Further online course e.g. for staff training may be more feasible now with the experience we have gained from this our first online course.

  More tutors may be trained up to facilitate online courses.

  New ideas for face to face course may emerge from feedback from online course.

- Who is in charge of using the evaluation results?
  The course coordinator.

2.1 Learning activities and feedback

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	Two months before course starts

- How are the learning activities suited to achieve the learning outcomes?

They are a mix of receiving information (like videos) testing own perception (like in a quiz) and reflecting on own learning and experience in interaction with others (discussion for a and chats).

- How do the learning activities allow the learners to build on their own experience?

One of the main learning activities is sharing experience in online discussions. Also more informal polls and creating a care delivery plan is based on the carers own experience.

- How are the learning activities likely to motivate the students to communicate with each other?

Participating in discussion is highly encouraged (see above).

- How will the learners receive feedback in and on their learning process?

By tutor and other students in discussion forums. From tutor on care delivery plan. Also some automated responses from the quizzes.

- Who is in charge of the feedback?

Mainly tutor.

- How will the learning activities stimulate reflection on own learning as well as the topics?

There are reflective activities built into the course. Gibbs Reflective Learning Cycle is explained to learners in an effort to help them think and reflect on their own learning and care situation. Reflective activities are aligned to course topics through the Care Delivery Action Plan.

The forums allow for discussion and reflection. Participants can enter in and out of these discussions as they wish.

Their journey as a carer allows for reflection, regarding new issues they may face after the course has ended but which was covered in the course, they may even go back into the course to update themselves.

Feedback has shown participants have already stated, they are glad course material will be available to them even when course ends.

2.2 Learning materials

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	One month before course starts

- How will the learning materials contribute to learners achieving the learning outcomes?

They will provide useful information on course topics. There is a mixture of formats for delivering the learning materials – video lectures, short videos, podcasts, infographics, Quizzes and Choices. These all seek to stimulate learners and cater for differing learning styles. ASI Publications and fact sheets are also available for participants on relevant topics.

- Are the learning materials free from offensive elements? If not; are the offensive elements serving an educational purpose?

Yes the learning materials are free from offensive elements.

- Is all information in the learning materials updated and evidence based (where applicable)?

Materials are updated every two years. They were last updated from September to December 2015 by a team of Alzheimer Society of Ireland course tutors and with teaching staff from IC Dien, Nursing College, Roeselare, Belgium.

- How will the learners be able to relate the information to their own experience?

The information is based on the experiences of previous learners who have been family carers of people with dementia.

All 10 topics covered are areas very relevant to help care for a PWD (person with dementia). Most of these topics if not all will be experienced by the carer at some stage, the carers experiences and information in course is very much interlinked.

- Is the language and complexity of the information suitable for the target group?

We think it is. We endeavour to provide the information in a straightforward manner using non-formal English. Feedback seems to suggest that we get this right most of the time.

We were mindful of the possible education skill mix of our participants and kept this in mind when developing the course.

- From what devices are the learning materials accessible, and what software requirements do they present?

The course can be accessed using PC, Laptop, iPad and iPhone. However, it doesn't seem to be accessible via the Moodle App, nor from Samsung Smart Phone. We are investigating this with our Moodle host.

- How long will it take the learner to access and interact with all the learning materials[1]? Is this expected time span communicated to the learners?

We expected 2-3 hours a week, based on watching the videos, reading the texts and answering the tasks. This was communicated in the pre-course information. However, from the pilots we learnt that many learners spent much more time than expected reading the forum posts as the discussions progressed and doing the care delivery action plans.

- Who is responsible for keeping the learning materials updated, and are there separate strategies for updating websites, files and links to external material?

The course coordinator is responsible. We will look into using a free software like brokenlinkcheck, but the relatively small size of the course makes a manual update manageable.

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[1] As learning materials are not only instructional text and video, but also discussions and communication contributed by the learners, it can be difficult to estimate how much material the learners will interact with and consequently how long time they will spend on each module. Our advice is to run a pilot, and adjust expectations according to the results from this.

2.3 The Tutors

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	One month before course starts

- Are there enough tutors to conduct individual guiding, feedback and other teaching activities according to course description?

Yes, we have one tutor per class of 12-15 participants.

- Are the tutors sufficiently skilled in their respective subjects?

Yes, our tutors are subject matter experts with many years' experience of delivering training and working in the field of dementia.

Tutors already facilitate face to face Family care training, so no new materials are involved.

Tutors are very comfortable with the topics in the course.

Tutors are very experienced dealing with participants questions, some of which can be very emotional and need to be dealt with in a sensitive manner.

- Have the tutors received sufficient training in how to deliver online tutoring (and first line support if applicable)?

Yes all of our tutors have undergone the Train the Trainer course to help their understanding of working in an online environment. The course lasted 5 days and had the following learning outcomes:
1. Will know how to navigate through, and edit in, a Learning Management System (Moodle)
2. Will have some general knowledge about educational technology
3. Will know the structure and content of some learning theories
4. Will have practiced applying learning theory to choice / design of a Learning Activity
5. Will have practiced various strategies and techniques in the moderation of online discussion forums
6. Will have some knowledge about how to evaluate online resources and platforms
7. Will have had the opportunity to establish a personal and/or professional learning network

- Are the tutors motivated for the online course?

Yes they are. But they needed to undertake the Train the Trainer course first to address their fears and help them understand how the course will work.

Tutors are aware of the gap that exist for online Family care training for carers who cannot attend a face to face course, or for areas in the country where face to face courses are not available. Therefore being able to address this issue as a tutor is very rewarding.

- Is there a written agreement between the institution and the tutor regulating work hours and scope?

No, there is an agreement around work hours per week and the flexibility around delivering these.

This may have to be looked at in the future, so far 3.5 hrs per week required. One hour of this is for the live chat. May also need to decide when does tutor take day/s off from online?

- Is there a plan in place to secure that the students can complete the course should one or more of the tutors get sick or leave the course for other reasons?

There is an informal plan in place. The course coordinator will cover in absence of course tutors.

3.1 Online learning environment

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	One month before course starts

- How does the learning platform allow for learner initiated learner-to-learner communication?

The learning platform allows for learner-to-learner communication mainly through the Discussion Forums, but also through the Live Chats and through our use of the Choice feature. In some forums the tutor takes a back seat and looks for hints and tips participants can share with each other. This initiates comradery within the group.

- How will the learner navigate within the platform? How many levels/clicks to get from login to a learning item like a discussion or a video?

We have made a video showing how the learner should navigate through the platform. The video is contained in the Induction section. It would be preferable to have a more intuitive system that doesn't require training.

Usually, three or four clicks (and some scrolling) will get you from Home page to a Learning Activity.

- Does the learning platform provide a one gate entry to all the communications and resources necessary for completing the course?

Once the learner logs onto Moodle they can access all the course topics under their My Courses page. The course does have some external resources like webpages.

- If external resources are used; are they accessible from the designated area of the learning platform?

Yes we do use some external resources and they can be accessed from the learning platform.

- Are the learners encouraged to share materials? If so; is there any quality assurance, and what channels are provided for this?

Learners are not openly encouraged to share materials.

Any materials suggested by a participant would have to be assessed by the tutor first as ASI cannot advocate for materials which are not research based, accurate and valid.

3.2 Presentation of content; order and mode

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	Three weeks before course starts

- Is the learning environment basically static (all content is pre-published and learner navigates between modules) or basically dynamic (what the learner sees when she/he logs in differs from week to week allowing the currently most relevant content to occupy top/first page). If it is dynamic; who is responsible for updating the environment during the course?

It is basically static, though each week two new topics are released. Each topic is produced in a separate Moodle page, and these pages are accessed by the learners from their My Courses link on their Home Moodle page.

- How does the layout (placement, colours and size) demonstrate importance and relevance of the different items?

We don't use different colours to emphasise importance of each item within a topic. We are having the course page analysed for Accessibility and Usability before we run the final version of the course in April 2017.

- Is the layout and presentation inviting and attractive?

We are within the limits of the LMS (Moodle) but will improve the layout following the Usability and Accessibility audit.

We will also look at using just one forum per topic, to cover all questions/discussions in this section so it is more user friendly to access.

- How does the design of the learning environment communicate to the learners what actions she/he is expected to perform, and in what order he/she is expected to perform them?

The design of each topic is numbered e.g. topic 1 is number 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 etc, and the learner is advised to work through the topic on numerical order. This could probably be a little clearer and again we expect to make improvements once the Usability and Accessibility audits are carried out and findings implemented. At the moment we are still in the Pilot phase.

- To what degree does the learning environment allow the learner to choose what content to access, in what order, what to skip and what to share or create?

The learner can choose to skip content. There are no conditions set, i.e. no activities have conditions that the learner must have completed a previous activity. So, in that sense there is complete freedom for the learner to skip sections or topics.

3.3 Uniform web design/accessibility

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	Two weeks before course starts

- **Can all content and functionality be accessed via the keyboard?**

As stated in 3.2, we are having the course tested by external experts for Accessibility and Usability. Once this audit takes place, we expect to make changes to layout to maximise options for all learners and to make the course as inclusive as possible under current guidelines.

- **Can all content and functionality be accessed with a screen reader?**

See answer immediately above.

- **Is there a visual alternative to auditive content?**

We have provided a Transcript to some of the video lectures and videos. Some of the videos have subtitles. This approach will be standardised to best practice guidelines once we have feedback from our external experts on the Usability and Accessibility audit.

- **Are all messages in a clear and simple English?**

Yes we think so. We have had some feedback that the language we use around assessment could be simplified. We will endeavour to act on such feedback.

- **Can the size of the text be customised by the reader on any device?**

The size of the text can be customised on a PC and laptop. But it seems it cannot be customised from a mobile device.

- **How strong is the contrast between text colour and background colour?**

Again the learner can adjust screen colour but this option is not available from mobile devices. We will look at this issue in the Usability and Accessibility audit.

- **How does the page design help the learner to stay focused on the relevant tasks?**

We use a chronological numbering system to illustrate the pathway or steps to be taken within each topic. But we think Usability can be improved with guidance from external experts.

- **Is the content accessible from all broadly used platforms/devices?**

Yes, though as mentioned above it does not seem to work from my Samsung Smartphone. We need to investigate this issue. It does work from PC, iPhone and iPad, though not all Accessibility features seem to be 'switched on'.

4.1 Communication on the institution's/course's website before the course

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	One month before course starts

- **How is the course positioned on the web site?**

This course is a pilot and hasn't got a prominent position on our website; The Alzheimer Society of Ireland website www.alzheimer.ie

Click Services and Support then Family Carer Training

Home Based Care – Home Based Education is marketed as the online version of our face-to-face course called Insights into Dementia – Informing and Empowering Family Carers.

- **What information regarding the course needs to be on the web site?**

We have listed the various topics covered on the course, the course format, how long it lasts, the locations of forthcoming face-to-face courses. We also have a Frequently Asked Questions document for those learners interested in the online course. Finally, we have the course leaflet and the course application form available to download from the website.

- **Who is responsible for the content on, and maintenance of, the web site?**

- **Is the web site subject to the same strict quality assurance as the course?**

I don't know, but I suspect that it is not.

- **How is it communicated who will benefit from and have access to the course?**

We state that the course is aimed at family carers of a loved one with dementia. So, it is not for social care workers or home care workers. Participants must be caring for a family member who has had a dementia diagnosis.

- **How is it communicated who stands responsible to the learner?**

Yes, name and photo of Course Coordinator and Course Tutor, their duties and contact details (email address) are all provided on the Induction page.

- **How is it communicated what the learner can expect to gain from taking the course?**

On the course leaflet there is a section called 'Why Undertake Insights into Dementia?' this states that the course is designed 'to help family carers understand the condition and increase their confidence in their ability to care.'

- **How is it communicated what the learner is expected to contribute?**

We make it clear that we expect or at least hope that learners will share their experiences with their fellow learners and that they will participate in course activities. This message is contained in the course leaflet, in the Frequently Asked Questions and on the Induction page of the course.

We may need to be more clear that we expect all participants to contribute in forums so some participants don't feel others are not making an effort. This is also true of the live chats. Though we also need to acknowledge that different learners learn in different ways – some feel more comfortable contributing in forums – others less so. But just because learners may not contribute to forums, doesn't necessarily mean they are not learning from the course.

- How is it communicated what software, hardware and infrastructure is required for attending and completing the course?

Learners can carry out a compatibility test during the Induction Week. The Frequently Asked Questions addresses the issue of what equipment is required.

4.2 Handling inquiries

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	Six weeks before course starts

- Where can the learners direct inquiries about the course before enrolling?

Either to the Training Administrator Christine Carr or to the Course Coordinator Fergus Timmons.

- Where can the learners direct inquiries during the course?

To the Course Coordinator if the query is related to technical issues.

- Will there be more than one channel for inquiries?

The course coordinator or the course tutor.

- How is this communicated to the learners?

It is communicated via the Induction page.

- Who is in charge of responding to the inquiries?

Pre-course the Training Administrator answers queries. During the course and depending on the nature of the query, the Course Coordinator would respond. If it is a subject related query, the course tutor would respond.

- What is the expected/acceptable response time?

We state in the Induction page that we will reply promptly to forum posts usually within 24 hours.

5.1 Support

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	Six weeks before course starts

- How can the learners get help to access/log in to the learning area if necessary?

They can email the course coordinator for any help required.

There is also the technical section in the introduction week that explains how to access course materials put up photo and partake in forums, quizzes and live chats.

- How can the learners get help if they encounter a software related problem, like not being able to read a pdf or dealing with an excessively protective firewall?

Again they can email the course coordinator. The course coordinator can and has liaised with The Alzheimer Society of Ireland's IT Manager.

- Will there be personal support online or via phone, and if so; how to be available when the students are actually logging in/trying to log in?

At the moment we have the resources to make this support available online only via email. It is not available 'live' but queries are answered promptly, often within the hour.

- How is the support system communicated to the learners?

During the Induction Week the name and contact details of the Course Coordinator and Course Tutor are displayed on the page. We could probably do more to confirm these arrangements throughout the different topics of the course.

- Who is responsible for the student support? Will it be the same person(s) before and during the course?

Before the course it is the Training Administrator. During the course it is the Course Coordinator.

- If the tutor is not also an admin; how is the tutor supported technically?

In our case the tutor is not the Moodle Administrator. The tutor is supported by the Course Coordinator who is also our Moodle Administrator.

5.2 Creating a safe and nurturing online environment

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	One month before course starts

- How will the learners introduce themselves to each other?

They will introduce themselves to each other in the Forums during the Induction Week. Learners are encouraged to post up a photograph of themselves. Some have uploaded photos of themselves with the loved one for whom they are providing care. Some sign their forum posts with their own and the name of the person they are caring for.

The tutor will encourage this by responding generally to introductions sent.

- What sort of information about themselves will the learners be expected/encouraged to provide?

In the initial stages of the course we would like learners to share something about their caring situation – who they are caring for, how long they have been caring. As they course progresses they will usually begin to share in more detail their situation and the challenges they have faced (and overcome) along the journey.

- How can the learners be sure that the other learners are who they claim to be?
- How will expectation of behaviour in the group (netiquette) be established?

Participant Expectations are set out in the Frequently Asked Questions and again on the Induction page. Gentle reminders about sharing experiences are contained in the Discussion Forum initial posts.

Close supervision of what participants are posting is undertaken by the tutor. If any issues arise he/she can consult with her course co-ordinator. So far no issues have arisen.

- Will there be some sort of non-disclosure agreement between the learners? (whether the answer is yes or no, what would be the reason?)

No we don't have a formal non-disclosure agreement between the learners. We felt that this would be too formal an approach to take. Instead, we outline expectations to learners during the Induction Week and also in the introductory text to the first few forums. We are careful to ensure language and tone is appropriate and courteous at all times. So far, we have not had any issues.

- In what ways will the tutor interact with the learners to make everybody feel safe?

The tutor will be courteous and polite to learners and will encourage participation and value all posts from learners.

The tutors are experienced in Face to face family care training and know which topics are more emotional than others. During these topics the tutor will probably be checking in and out of the forums more often to see if any participants may need extra support.

- How is the learners' personal information kept safe?

The Moodle site is secure and not accessible by anybody who does not have an account. This is made clear to learners in the Frequently Asked Questions document.

- To what degree can the learners create and share content in the online learning environment?

The learners create their own learning by contributing their own experiences to the learning community (their fellow learners). This diversity of this shared experience enriches all the learners.

Learners very quickly seem to identify with other participants on the course, particularly if they have similar family dynamics. This can be quite apparent in the forums and online comradery forms.

In past online courses participants decided to exchange email address to keep in touch with each other after the course ended. This support to each other can only be positive.

5.3 Communication and monitoring the online environment

Name of person responsible for checking the items on this list:	Fergus Timmons, Training Manager
Last date for checking all the items:	Three weeks before course starts

- How is the communication based on the learners' needs rather than the institution's needs?

We have found when running this course in a face-to-face environment that learners need and want to share their experience. They also want to learn more about dementia and what practical steps they can take to help their caring situation. So, when we designed the online course we felt it was important to offer various communication tools for learners to help them share their experience and situation.

We are very much lead by what participants have expressed in the past regarding their communication needs.

- What channels are made available for the learners to communicate online? How is each channel designed to promote a specific kind of communication?

We don't encourage or discourage "off platform" communication. However, learners in the past have expressed a wish to stay in touch with each other after the course finishes and have exchanged email addresses to this end.

- To what degree are the learners encouraged/discouraged to communicate "off platform" e.g. in social media or via email?

The tutor is available to learners as required during the course. The tutor is paid for 3.5 hours per week. This is the same as for the face to face course.

- How often, when and for how long time will the tutor be available to the learners online?
- How will the tutor communicate with the learners, mainly in group discussions or mainly one to one?

Mainly in group discussions via the forums. However, there is the possibility of communicating one to one if required.

- Who will be moderating the learners' online discussions and when?

The Course Tutor will be moderating the discussion forums throughout the week.

- How and when will the policies for online tutor presence and guiding be communicated to the learners?

We don't have a formal policy governing Tutor Presence and Guidance. We do set out in the Induction page what the learners can expect regarding tutor support.

- What will happen with the learners' access to the learning environment after the course is completed?

The course will be available for one year after the course is completed.

Participants have already expressed their gratitude for this arrangement.

- Who is responsible for the learning environment and possible communication after the course is completed?

The course coordinator is responsible for the learning environment and communication to learners after the course is completed.