SINGAPORE STANDARD

Geragogy guidelines on training senior learners

SS 693:2023
(ICS 03.080.30; 03.180)

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Contents

Foreword

This Singapore Standard was prepared by the Working Group on Geragogy Guidelines set up by the Technical Committee on Consumer Services under the purview of the Services Standards Committee Retail and Consumer Services Sub-group.

Given the limited research in geragogy, recommendations were based on local and overseas literature, expert gerontological knowledge as well as insights through interviews, surveys and focus groups discussions from various stakeholders (e.g. trainers and senior learners) on their experiences in learning for the development of this standard.

This standard provides best practices for cultivating and enhancing a positive, conducive and inclusive learning environment for senior learners to achieve better results and experiences in their learning process. The standard highlights the importance of applying appropriate delivery approaches that cater to the diverse spectrum of senior learners and covers trainer dispositions useful for engaging senior learners.

In preparing this standard, reference was made to the following publications:

1.   Geragogy guidelines on training senior learners, by the Council for Third Age and the Singapore University of Social Sciences (March 2021).

2.   SS 618:2016 Guidelines on user interface design for older adults.

Permission is made for the use of information from the "Geragogy guidelines on training senior learners (March 2021)".

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this Singapore Standard may be the subject of patent rights. Enterprise Singapore shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

NOTE

1.   Singapore Standards (SSs) and Technical References (TRs) are reviewed periodically to keep abreast of technical changes, technological developments and industry practices. The changes are documented through the issue of either amendments or revisions. Where SSs are deemed to be stable, i.e. no foreseeable changes in them, they will be classified as "mature standards". Mature standards will not be subject to further review unless there are requests to review such standards.

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3.   Compliance with a SS or TR does not exempt users from any legal obligations.

Geragogy guidelines on training senior learners

0   Introduction

The wide beneficial impact of lifelong learning on a senior learner's physical health and psychosocial well-being has been documented in various research literature. With a rising proportion of older adults participating in lifelong learning and the acceleration of digitalisation in recent years resulting in the growth of online learning, there is an increasing need to address the learning needs and challenges unique to senior learners to support their lifelong learning. Lifelong learning is one of the key components to healthy ageing as it allows seniors to acquire the necessary resources and growth that help them stay cognitively active, socially engaged and financially independent as they enjoy their silver years.

There has been much research on the methods and principles used in adult education, also known as andragogy, based on the assumptions that the adult learners have certain characteristics − independent, self-directed and motivated, practical and actively involved, and has a wealth of life experiences. While the andragogy theories can be applicable to lifelong learning in general, the learning journeys of older adults are further characterised by physical, emotional and social dimensions that are distinct from younger adult learners. These findings suggest that trainers could be made aware of and take into consideration these unique characteristics (e.g. specific learning styles, attitudes and physical ability) and adjust their teaching plans accordingly for effective teaching for senior learners. By complementing a person-centric training approach with the principles of geragogy, trainers will be better equipped to address the varied permutations of profiles, needs and characteristics among senior learners engaged. However, this concept of geragogy, which argues that older adults are sufficiently different that they warrant a separate education theory, is relatively new.

1   Scope

1.1   This standard aims to guide any persons, in particular trainers, involved in coaching and training seniors on how they can alleviate the learning barriers for senior learners for a more effective and fruitful interactive engagement.

This standard covers:

−   common learning characteristics of senior learners and the strategies that cater to the corresponding needs;

−   general strategies for the preparation and delivery of training programmes for senior learners;

−   desirable characteristics and disposition of the trainer.

1.2   This standard is relevant in both formal and informal settings, and applicable to both physical and online learning programmes with interactive learning components.

1.3   This standard is applicable to interactive engagements and programmes targeted at senior learners.

1.4   This standard can serve as a reference for trainers, who have been engaging learners of all ages, to interact better with senior learners.

1.5   This standard can also serve as an introductory resource to prepare individuals for positions involving interactive engagement with seniors.

1.6   A summary of the recommendations given in this standard is found in Annex A and can be used as a quick reference guide.

2   Normative references

There are no normative references in this standard.