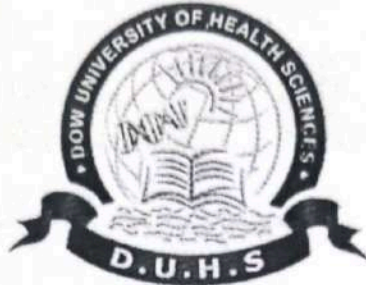




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Document Number:	DUHS / DLC / SOP / 01

DOW UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Policy for Digital Learning Centre and Smart Classroom

	NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE	DATE
PREPARED BY:	Dr. Syed Jaffar Abbas Zaidi	Deputy Director_____		15-10-24
REVIEWED BY:	Dr. Muhammad Yahya Noori	Director_____		15-10-24
APPROVED BY:	Prof. Mohammed Saeed Quraishy	Vice Chancellor DUHS		17/x/2024
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Department of Distance Learning
& Online Teaching
Dow University of Health Sciences



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- Pro-Vice Chancellor(s)
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- Program Directors
- Director, Quality Enhancement Cell
- Chief Information Officer
- Controller Examination
- Chairperson, Curriculum Review Committee
- Director Admission
- Director & Additional Director, Health Professions Education
- QMR



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TERMS AND DEFINITION

TERMS	DEFINITION
Virtual Learning Environment	<p>The Virtual Learning Environment is an online system that is designed to cater teaching & learning needs of an educational institution. It helps to deliver learning anytime and anywhere using an internet connection.</p> <p>The virtual learning environment allows the student to experience an enhanced learning experience offering greater flexibility, interactivity, and engagement through digital presence in courses.</p>
Online Teaching	<p>Online teaching typically refers to courses that are delivered completely online, meaning there are no physical or on-campus class sessions.</p> <p>Online courses can be designed for a handful of enrolled students or can be made open and accessible to a wide variety of participants.</p>
LMS	Learning Management System



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BOS	Board of Studies
DOC	Document
DUHS	Dow University of Health Sciences
FM	Form
HEC	Higher Education Commission
PMDC	Pakistan Medical and Dental Council
QEC	Quality Enhancement Cell
QMR	Quality Management Representative
QMS	Quality Management System
QSP	Quality System Procedure
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
VC	Vice Chancellor



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1. PURPOSE

The Digital Learning Centre (DLC) at Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS) is designed to facilitate the digitalization of education programs at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. This policy outlines the governance, curriculum design, content development, and support mechanisms necessary for effective online learning.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all constituent and affiliated colleges, institutes and schools of DUHS. It extends to all personnel involved in teaching, including full-time, part-time, and contractual faculty members, as well as students enrolled in physical, hybrid and online programs.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

The Digital Learning Centre (DLC) will ensure close collaboration between academic and administrative sections to maintain compliance with HEC guidelines. This office will be responsible for:

4. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

- 4.1. Developing, implementing, and overseeing programs with Online and Distance Learning components.
- 4.2. Ensuring that all courses with Online and Distance Learning components courses meet the quality standards as prescribed by the HEC.
- 4.3. Maintaining records of student and faculty engagement in Open and distance Learning programs.
- 4.4. Regular internal monitoring and evaluation of Open and distance Learning programs, with reports submitted to the Office of Institutional Quality Assessment and Enhancement (QEC)

5. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

5.1. Curriculum Alignment

All curricula offered through Open and distance Learning must conform to HEC-approved guidelines. Each Open and distance Learning program must have a curriculum plan that includes specific learning objectives, outcomes, and instructional strategies that ensure the same level of rigor as traditional, face-to-face programs.

5.2. Instructional Design



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5.2.1. Course Planning: Each online course will be designed with clear learning objectives, outcomes, and assessments. The instructional design must include a mix of synchronous (live) and asynchronous (recorded) teaching methods.

5.2.2. Content Delivery: Instructional designs should leverage multiple media content such as videos, and interactive modules and provide a blend of online and practical learning experiences where necessary.

5.2.3. Approval Process: All instructional designs and accredited course materials must be approved by the relevant bodies before deployment.

6. CONTENT AND MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Development of Learning Materials

6.1.1. Learning materials should be developed or selected by the subject matter experts based on the specific needs of the course, ensuring alignment with learning objectives and outcomes. This includes the use of digital and multimedia content that is engaging, contextually relevant, and supportive of self-directed learning.

6.1.2. Open Educational Resources (OER) should be integrated wherever possible to enhance accessibility and cost-effectiveness.

6.2 Review and Updating

6.2.1. Course materials must be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they remain relevant, accurate, and aligned with current academic standards and technological advancements

7. STUDENT AND FACULTY SUPPORT SERVICES

7.1 Student Support

7.1.1. A Student Support Cell (SSC) will be established within the DLC to assist students with issues related to online learning, including technical support, counseling, and academic guidance.

7.1.2. Students with limited access to technology or internet services will be provided with alternative means of accessing course materials, such as flash drives. Flexibility in attendance and assessment will be offered to accommodate these challenges.

7.2 Faculty Support

7.2.1. Faculty members involved in all programs with Online and Distance Learning components will receive comprehensive training in digital teaching methods and the use of the



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Learning Management System (LMS). Ongoing professional development opportunities will be provided to ensure continuous improvement in online teaching quality.

7.2.2. Faculty who face challenges with access to necessary technology will be supported by the university through access to digital resources and infrastructure at designated locations on campus.

8. EVALUATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

8.1 Student Assessment

8.1.1. Assessments for online courses will include a combination of formative (e.g., quizzes, assignments) and summative (e.g., exams) evaluations. All assessments will be conducted in a manner that ensures academic integrity and fairness.

8.1.2. Proctored exams and secure assessment environments will be maintained to meet HEC standards.

8.2. Quality Assurance

The quality policies, as given by the Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) at DUHS will be implemented and QEC will oversee the implementation of quality assurance processes for all programs with Online and distance Learning components. This includes conducting regular internal audits, collecting feedback from students and faculty, and generating annual reports in line with HEC guidelines.

8.3. Accreditation and Compliance:


All Programs with Online and Distance Learning components will be recognized by relevant accreditation councils where applicable. The QEC will ensure that all Learning courses meet the required standards for accreditation and that any necessary adjustments are made based on feedback and evaluation.

9. TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Management System (LMS)

9.1.1. The LMS will serve as the central platform for the delivery of online courses, hosting academic materials, facilitating communication between students and faculty, and tracking student progress.

9.1.2. The LMS will be regularly updated and maintained to ensure it meets the technological and pedagogical needs of the Open and distance Learning programs. This includes ensuring the system's security and scalability to handle the increasing demands of online education.

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9.1.3. The LMS will provide the virtual learning environment, with user IDs created for every individual user such as students, teachers and administrators, or any other moderating/administrative participants. However, the administrative personnel (LMS Administrators, nominated by Institutions/Colleges/Schools) of each college/institute/school will be responsible for coordinating with the help of Digital Learning Center's support, as needed.

9.1.4. The Institute/College/School's administrative personnel are also responsible for ensuring current student enrollment in each online course/class and updating it in line with CMS requirements; whereas, the IT department and its support personnel are responsible for resolving connectivity issues of students and faculty from the University's side, that the teacher or students enrolled in the class may face.

9.1.5. The Digital Learning Center is responsible for overseeing the provisions of the functional LMS (i.e. dlc.duhs.edu.pk).

9.1.6. The Digital learning Centre also assumes primary responsibility for and exercises oversight of online courses.

9.2 CYBERSECURITY

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) directorate will be responsible for implementing and maintaining cybersecurity measures to protect the integrity of the LMS and the privacy of all users. Regular audits and updates will be conducted to address potential vulnerabilities.

9.3 Technical Support

A dedicated technical support team will be available to assist both students and faculty with any technical issues related to the LMS, ensuring that all online learning activities proceed smoothly.


10. Student Engagement And Participation

10.1 Attendance and Participation

10.1.1. Attendance policies for online courses will be documented within the LMS when requested, tracking student engagement through participation in live sessions and completion of asynchronous activities.

10.1.2. Flexibility in attendance may be granted to students facing connectivity or technological challenges, with alternative arrangements made to ensure they do not fall behind in their studies.

10.2 Communication and Interaction

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The policy encourages active communication between students and faculty through the LMS, including the use of discussion forums, messaging, and video conferencing tools. All communication should be conducted in a professional manner, and faculty are expected to be available for student queries during designated office hours.

11. GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL AND HANDLING

11.1.1. The Student Support Cell (SSC) will handle all student grievances related to online learning. A formal process for lodging and resolving complaints will be in place, ensuring that all issues are addressed promptly and effectively.

11.1.2. Faculty grievances will be managed by the Open and distance Learning management office, with clear procedures for reporting and resolving issues related to online teaching and course management.

12. POLICY REVIEW AND UPDATES

12.1 Continuous Improvement

12.1.1. This policy will be reviewed annually to incorporate feedback from stakeholders and to ensure alignment with the latest HEC guidelines and technological advancements in the field of online education.

12.1.2. Updates and revisions will be approved by the Vice Chancellor and other relevant statutory bodies before being implemented. The Digital Learning Center will oversee the implementation of any changes and ensure that all stakeholders are informed and trained accordingly.

12.2 Feedback Mechanism

A structured feedback mechanism will be established to gather input from students, faculty, and administrative staff regarding the effectiveness of the DLC policy and the quality of online education. This feedback will be analyzed and used to make continuous improvements to the policy and its implementation.

13. RELATED DOCUMENTS

The following documents are related to this policy and should be referred to for further details:

- 13.1.1. HEC Open and distance Learning Policy
- 13.1.2. DUHS Code of Conduct for Faculty and Students
- 13.1.3. DUHS Online Assessment Policy



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14. ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Checklist for Online Program Launch

A checklist outlining the steps and requirements for launching a new online program will be included as an annexure to this policy. This checklist will serve as a guide for faculty and program coordinators to ensure all necessary preparations are completed before an online course is offered

ANNEXURE A

CHECKLIST FOR THE START OF AN ONLINE PROGRAM

S.NO.	PARAMETER	STATUS	
		YES	NO
1.	SOP for E-learning program developed		
2.	Study guide as per minimum recommendations have been prepared		
3.	Online courses to be offered approved by ACADEMIC COUNCIL		
4.	All necessary information of an online program is available on LMS		
5.	Books and reading materials available on LMS		
6.	Faculty trained and certified ready for online teaching and using LMS		
7.	Necessary updated information of students collected		
8.	Students training performed		
9.	Dry run performed (if applicable)		
10.	Code of conduct informed to the faculty		
11.	Code of conduct informed to the students		
12.	Any technology deficient student(s) identified		
13.	Role of SSC informed to the faculty and students		



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Annexure B: Guidelines for Developing Online and Distance Learning Components

ANNEXURE B

a. Course Policy.	Course uploaded in DOES must be verified by the institute in its comprehensiveness.
b. Course Introduction	A description of the course Uploaded on the DOES
c. Learning Objectives	Learning objectives defined for the course/module/subject being taught.
d. Evaluation / Grading Policy	Reviewed existing evaluation policy and devised an effective evaluation/grading policy/weightage for online learning. * The evaluation/grading policy may be systematically applied to the students enrolled in the program.
e. Course pre- requisites	Definition of course pre-requisites, if any.
f. Topic by Topic: Lesson Plan	A preview of the topic-by-topic lesson plan Uploaded on DOES for the entire course/module subject being taught or remaining to be taught in the semester.
g. Key Dates and Times or Online Meeting Times along with Venue details, such as online meetings of Zoom, etc.	Teacher must record/note and communicate to the students the required number of online meetings in the course term and mention ahead of time the Key Dates of online lecture delivery, assignment submissions, and quizzes and /or other online meeting times for follow up, as required. The meeting times of one course should not cross over or take over another course lecture being offered. Therefore, a separate academic timetable for online courses should be devised according to those classes offered online for each by the program director and communicated to the students before launch of course.
h. Library Readiness- Required Textbooks and Reference books available and provide to the students through online means	Topic by Topic readings assigned from the reference book or required textbook as mentioned in the course plan.
i. Further additional reading materials, such as study guides, aids, instructional online videos, handouts, individual /group	Uploaded on DOES for the entire course, week 1 to week 16 (topic by topic)/week to week, till the end of the course.



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assignments, power points or case studies.	
j. Course duration and class sessions should be appropriate for each of the institution's educational programs with adequate intervals so that the student is adequately able to learn and assimilate the information.	Recommended class/session intervals should not be more than 45 minutes to a 1 hour (followed by 10-15-minute breaks) before continuation of any further sessions, if any. i.e. in a 2 hour class, a 45 minute session followed by a break of 15 minutes is recommended, and in a 3 hour weekly class, 3 breaks of 10-15 should be allowable to the students for the session. Lectures may be asynchronous mode of delivery where the recorded lectures are sent to the student and uploaded on DOES, through provision of recording software.
Attendance/ Class Participation Policy: Please note Attendance record of students enrolled in online courses may be documented in the DOES (LMS) through views of recorded lecture or participation in online/live lectures and as weighted, assignment submission/other submissions that display active student engagement during the online course offering.	
Flexibility in attendance may be permitted to those students with issues regarding access as communicated to the University and Concerned PROGRAM Director /Principial of college/school or institute, including lodging such a complaint through the DOW CONNECT.	