

QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

SOP D.15.01

TITLE: SOP: DIGITAL LEARNING

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Datum / Date: 25 July 2024	Datum / Date: 26 November 2024
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Handtekeninge / Signatures	

Hersieningsrekord / Revision Record			
			Datum / Date
Vorige Weergawe No. Previous Version Nr.		Vorige Hersiening Last Review	July 2024
Nuwe No. New Nr.	01	Goedgekeur vir uitreiking Approved for issue	26 November 2024





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OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING HUGENOTE KOLLEGE'S DIGITAL LEARNING POLICY:

I. ENABLING ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL CONTENT:

I.1 Ensure that all courses have accessible online material and resources.

I.1.1. Conduct Accessibility Audits:

- Perform a comprehensive accessibility audit of existing online materials for each course.
- Identify any barriers that may hinder access for students with disabilities.

I.1.2. Develop Accessibility Guidelines:

- Create and disseminate clear guidelines for faculty on creating accessible content.
- Include information on accessible document formats, image descriptions, and video captions.

I.1.3. Provide Accessibility Training:

- Offer training sessions for faculty members on creating and presenting accessible content.
- Include information on using accessible features in common tools and platforms.

I.1.4. Utilize Accessible Learning Platforms:

- Choose or customize a learning management system (LMS) and MyNotes that supports accessibility standards.
- Ensure that the LMS and MyNotes are navigable for users.

I.1.5. Captioning and Transcription Services:

- Implement a policy requiring captioning for multimedia content, including videos.

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- Provide transcription services for audio content to accommodate different learning styles.

I.1.6. Use Accessible Document Formats:

- Encourage the use of accessible document formats, such as PDFs with proper tagging.
- Ensure that text documents are formatted easily readable by screen readers.

I.1.7. Provide Multiple Formats:

- Offer course materials in multiple formats (text, audio, video) to cater to diverse learning preferences.
- Allow students to choose the format that suits their individual needs.

I.1.8. Regular Accessibility Checks:

- Establish a process for regular accessibility checks on online materials.
- Use automated tools and manual reviews to ensure ongoing compliance.

I.1.9. Collaboration with Accessibility Services:

- Collaborate with the College's academic and administrative departments to gather insights and feedback.
- Incorporate recommendations from accessibility experts to improve course materials.

I.1.10. Establish a sub-committee on Accessibility in the Academic Committee:

- Form an accessibility committee comprising faculty, students, and experts.
- Review and update accessibility policies based on feedback and emerging best practices.

I.1.11. Encourage Inclusive Design:

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- Promote the adoption of inclusive design principles in course development.
- Encourage faculty to consider diverse needs and learning styles from the outset.

I.1.12. Accessibility Resources and Support:

- Provide a centralized repository of accessibility resources for faculty.
- Establish a support system for faculty seeking assistance with creating accessible materials.

I.1.13. Student Feedback Mechanism:

- Establish a mechanism for students to provide feedback on the accessibility of course materials.
- Use feedback to continuously improve accessibility features and address any issues.

I.1.14. Compliance Monitoring:

- Implement a monitoring system to ensure ongoing compliance with accessibility standards.
- Regularly review and update policies based on changes in standards or technology.

I.2 Implement user-friendly learning management (LMS) and communication (MyNotes) systems for easy navigation.

I.2.1. Training and Onboarding:

- Provide comprehensive training sessions for faculty, staff, and students on how to use the selected LMS and MyNotes.
- Include tutorials, workshops, and resources to ensure everyone is comfortable navigating the system.

I.2.2. Customization:



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- Customize the LMS and MyNotes to align with the College's branding and specific requirements.
- Ensure that the interface is intuitive and reflects the College's identity.

I.2.3. Mobile Accessibility:

- Choose an LMS and communication platform (MyNotes) that is mobile-friendly and compatible with various devices.
- Ensure that students and faculty can access the LMS and MyNotes seamlessly from electronic devices.

I.2.4. Clear Navigation Structure:

- Establish a clear and intuitive navigation structure within the LMS and MyNotes.
- Group related features and content logically to make it easy for users to find what they need.

I.2.5. Consistent Design and Layout:

- Maintain a consistent design and layout throughout the LMS and MyNotes.
- Use clear headings, fonts, and colour schemes to enhance readability and user recognition.

I.2.6. User Support and Help Resources:

- Create a repository of help resources, FAQs, and troubleshooting guides.
- Provide accessible and visible support options within the LMS and MyNotes interface.

I.2.7. Feedback Mechanism:

- Implement a feedback mechanism within the LMS to gather user insights.
- Regularly solicit feedback from faculty and students to identify areas for improvement.

I.2.8. Integration with Other Systems:



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- Integrate the LMS and MyNotes with other systems used by the College, such as student information systems and library databases.
- Work towards seamless data flow between systems to enhance efficiency.

1.2.9. Regular Updates and Maintenance:

- Stay informed about updates and new features offered by the LMS provider.
- Schedule regular maintenance to address any issues, improve performance, and ensure security.

1.2.10. Accessibility Compliance:

- Ensure that the LMS and MyNotes comply with accessibility standards to cater to users with diverse needs.
- Conduct accessibility audits to identify and address any potential barriers.

1.2.11. User Feedback Iterations:

- Continuously gather user feedback on the LMS and MyNotes based on the evolving needs of faculty and students.
- Implement updates and improvements based on user suggestions and technological advancements.

1.2.12. Scalability Planning:

- Consider the scalability of the chosen LMS and MyNotes to accommodate the growing number of users and evolving technology requirements.
- Plan for future updates and enhancements to meet the College's expanding needs.

2. **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND STANDARDS:**

2.1 Implement measures to prevent plagiarism and cheating in online assessments.

2.1.1. Clear Academic Integrity Policies:

- Communicate academic integrity policies to students at the beginning of each course.
- Outline the consequences of plagiarism and cheating.



2.1.2. Use of Plagiarism Detection Tools:

- Employ plagiarism detection software, such as Turnitin or Grammarly, to identify and deter plagiarism.
- Run student submissions through this software to check for similarities with existing online content.

2.1.3. Varied Assessment Formats:

- Design assessments in various formats, including essays, multiple-choice questions, and practical assignments.
- Use a mix of question types to make cheating more challenging for students.

2.1.4 Integrated and engaging assessment

- Aim to incorporate community engagement, teaching/learning, and research into assessment. Assessments based on local contexts tend to require students' full participation and are less prone to academic dishonesty.
- Design assessments that require critical thinking, analysis, and application of knowledge. Engaging assessments reduces the likelihood of students relying solely on external resources.

2.1.5 Randomize Questions and Answers:

- Randomize the order of questions and answer choices to prevent collaboration during assessments.
- Create question banks to generate unique sets of questions for each student.

2.1.6. Timed Assessments:

- Implement time restrictions on assessments to minimize the opportunity for collaboration or consulting external resources.
- Set realistic time limits based on the complexity of the assessment.

2.1.7. Live Proctoring or Remote Invigilation:

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- Utilize live proctoring services to monitor students in real-time during assessments.
- Remote invigilation tools can help prevent unauthorized behaviour.

2.1.8. Secure Browser Environments:

- Require students to use secure browser environments during online assessments. These environments restrict access to other applications and prevent students from opening additional tabs.

2.1.9. Unique Assessment Versions:

- Create multiple versions of assessments with different question orders or variations.
- Assign each student a unique version to minimize the chances of copying.

2.1.10. Academic Honesty Pledges:

- Incorporate an academic honesty pledge within assessments, requiring students to confirm that they have not cheated.
- Reinforce the importance of ethical behaviour.

2.1.11. Discussion Forums and Collaborative Learning:

- Foster a positive online learning environment by encouraging collaboration in discussion forums.
- Make a clear distinction between collaborative learning activities and individual assessments.

2.1.12. Student Identity Verification:

- Implement identity verification measures, such as facial recognition or photo identification, before starting assessments.
- Ensure that the person taking the assessment is a registered student.

2.1.13. Regularly Update Assessment Content:

- Regularly update assessment content to prevent the reuse of questions from previous years. This reduces the likelihood of students sharing answers.



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2.1.14. Educate Students on Academic Integrity:

- Conduct workshops or include modules on academic integrity to educate students about the importance of ethical behaviour.
- Clearly define what constitutes plagiarism and cheating.

2.1.15. Faculty Involvement:

- Actively engage with students during assessments to identify irregularities or suspicious behaviour.
- Promptly investigate and address any reported cases of plagiarism or cheating.

2.2 Regularly review and update online course content to meet academic standards.

2.2.1. Establish a Review Schedule:

- Develop a systematic schedule for reviewing and updating course content. This may be on a semester or annual basis, depending on the course's nature and frequency of changes.

2.2.2. Set up a Programme Review Committee:

- Assemble a review committee consisting of relevant academic staff and where possible involve external subject matter experts and instructional designers. It is highly desirable to involve external experts with diverse approaches and perspectives in the evaluation of the course content and presentation.
- The process must be managed by the respective course coordinators with report per programme to the Academic Committee.

2.2.3. Collect Student Feedback:

- Solicit student feedback on the course content through surveys, evaluations, or discussion forums. Use student input to identify areas that may need improvement or updates.

2.2.4. Monitor Industry Trends:

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- Stay informed about industry trends, advancements, and changes relevant to the course content. Update materials to incorporate the latest information and practices.

2.2.5. Review Learning Outcomes:

- Regularly reassess and refine learning outcomes and material as far as possible to align with the evolving goals of the course and academic standards.
- Ensure ongoing involvement with professional and industry associations to get input on the curriculum's applicability and standard, as well as whether applicants are workplace-ready after completing their courses.
- Ensure that course objectives remain clear, measurable, and achievable.

2.2.6. Evaluate Assessment Methods:

- Assess the effectiveness of current assessment methods in measuring student understanding and consider incorporating new assessment strategies that align with academic standards and promote critical thinking.

2.2.7. Update Multimedia Elements:

- Review and update multimedia elements, such as videos, animations, and interactive simulations. Ensure that all multimedia components contribute to the learning objectives.

2.2.8. Ensure Accessibility:

- Verify that all course materials are accessible to registered students and update content where necessary to meet accessibility standards and guidelines.

2.2.9. Check Links and Resources:

- Regularly check and update links to external resources, ensuring they are still valid and relevant, and replace outdated or broken links with current and reliable sources.

2.2.10. Incorporate Feedback from Faculty:

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- Encourage faculty members to provide feedback based on their experience teaching the course and address any challenges or issues raised to enhance the overall course quality.

2.2.11. Align with Pedagogical Advances:

- Stay current on pedagogical developments and instructional design approaches.
- Update course content to incorporate new approaches that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. This may include, but are not limited, to the following:
 - Involving students in the selection of a percentage of the learning material, based on needs identified by them;
 - Incorporating reflexive exercises to promote transformative learning experiences;
 - Cultivating positive relationships with students to enhance relational pedagogy;
 - Ensure integrated learning by promoting community engagement for students where they can conduct research and reflect on their teaching/learning material while making a tangible difference to community contexts.

2.2.12. Use Learning Analytics:

- Analyse learning analytics data to identify areas where students may be struggling or excelling and use this data to tailor and update content to better meet the needs of learners.

2.2.13. Collaborate with other Subject Experts:

- Collaborate with other subject matter experts or professionals in the field to ensure the content remains accurate and up to date.

2.2.14. Document Changes:

- Maintain documentation of all changes made to the course content. Keep a record of updates, revisions, and the rationale behind each modification.

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3. PRIVACY AND DATA SECURITY:

3.1 Adhere to South African data protection laws and regulations.

The College must adhere to the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), which is the primary data protection law. POPIA regulates the processing of personal information and establishes the rights and obligations of those responsible for processing such information. It outlines principles for the lawful processing of personal information and grants individuals certain rights over their data.

❖ Key Principles of POPIA:

- Accountability: Data controllers are accountable for ensuring compliance with POPIA.
- Processing Limitation: Personal information must be processed lawfully and in a reasonable manner.
- Purpose Specification: Information must be collected for a specific, explicitly defined, and legitimate purpose.
- Data Minimization: Only necessary information should be processed, and excessive processing is prohibited.
- Quality: Ensure that personal information is accurate, complete, and not misleading.
- Transparency: Data subjects should be aware of the processing and purpose of their personal information.
- Security Safeguards: Implement appropriate security measures to protect personal information.
- Data Subject Participation: Individuals have the right to access and correct their personal information.

❖ Data Subject Rights:

POPIA grants data subjects various rights, including the right to access their information, request correction, and object to processing under certain conditions.

❖ Consent Requirements:

The College must obtain the explicit consent of data subjects before processing their personal information in certain situations.



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❖ Data Breach Notification:

POPIA requires organizations to report data breaches to the Information Regulator and, in some cases, to affected data subjects.

❖ Information Officer:

The Rector of the College will be the Information Officer responsible for ensuring compliance with POPIA.

❖ Cross-Border Data Transfers:

If personal information is transferred outside of South Africa, the recipient must provide a similar level of protection to that required by POPIA.

❖ Impact Assessments:

Conduct privacy impact assessments (PIAs) to assess and mitigate the risks associated with processing personal information.

3.2 Securely store and transmit personal and academic data of students and faculty.

The following are key steps to ensure the security of personal and academic data:

3.2.1. Data Encryption:

- Utilize strong encryption protocols to protect data both at rest and in transit.
- Implement encryption for data stored on servers, databases, and during transmission over networks.

3.2.2. Secure Data Storage:

- Employ secure storage solutions, such as encrypted databases and file systems, to protect stored data.
- Regularly update and patch storage systems to address vulnerabilities.

3.2.3. Access Controls:

- Implement strict access controls to ensure that only authorized personnel can access sensitive data.



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- Use role-based access control (RBAC) to limit access based on job roles and responsibilities.

3.2.4. Regular Audits and Monitoring:

- Conduct regular security audits to identify vulnerabilities and assess the effectiveness of security controls.
- Implement continuous monitoring to detect and respond to any suspicious activities.

3.2.5. Data Classification:

- Classify data based on its sensitivity and importance.
- Apply different security measures to data categories, with stricter controls for highly sensitive information.

3.2.6. Secure Transmission Protocols:

- Use secure communication protocols, such as HTTPS, for transmitting personal and academic data over networks.
- Avoid transmitting sensitive data via unsecured channels.

3.2.7. Employee Training:

- Provide comprehensive training to staff and faculty on data security best practices.
- Ensure that employees are aware of their role in maintaining data security.

3.2.8. Regular Security Updates:

- Keep software, operating systems, and applications up to date with the latest security patches.
- Regularly update and patch systems to address vulnerabilities.

3.2.9. Data Backups:

- Regularly back up personal and academic data to secure, offsite locations.
- Implement a robust data recovery plan in case of accidental loss or a security incident.



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3.2.10. Incident Response Plan:

- Develop and regularly update an incident response plan to address potential data breaches.
- Identify roles, responsibilities, and next steps in the case of a security incident.

3.2.11. Data Privacy Policies:

- Establish and communicate clear data privacy policies within the College.
- Ensure that faculty and staff are aware of their responsibilities in handling personal and academic data.

3.2.12. Vendor Security Assessments:

- If using third-party vendors for data processing or storage, conduct thorough security assessments.
- Ensure that vendors adhere to data protection and security standards.

3.2.13. Compliance with Data Protection Laws:

- Regularly review and update policies to align with evolving legal requirements.

3.2.14. Secure Collaboration Platforms:

- Use secure collaboration platforms for sharing and collaborating on academic and administrative data. These platforms should adhere to high-security standards.

4. **SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:**

4.1 Provide online tutoring services and academic advisors for distance learners.

4.1.1 Online Tutoring Services:

- Virtual Tutoring Platforms:

Invest in virtual tutoring platforms that support real-time interaction, video conferencing, and screen sharing. Platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or dedicated tutoring platforms can facilitate online tutoring sessions.

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- Tutors:

Employ competent senior students with commendable academic records and expertise in their subjects as tutors. These tutors must be familiar with

- Course content
- Online teaching tools and methods;
- Academic writing
- Referencing and academic integrity
- Appointment Scheduling:

Implement an online scheduling system for tutoring sessions and allow students to book appointments based on their availability.

- Recorded Sessions:

Record tutoring sessions (with consent) for review by students and then provide access to recorded sessions for reinforcement and reference.

- Interactive Tools:

Use interactive tools such as virtual whiteboards, online quizzes, and collaborative document editing during tutoring sessions to foster active engagement and participation.

- Feedback Mechanism:

Establish a feedback mechanism for students to provide input on the effectiveness of tutoring sessions and use the feedback to continually improve the tutoring service.

4.1.2. Academic Advising for Distance Learners:

- Dedicated Academic Advisors:

Assign dedicated academic advisors knowledgeable about program requirements, courses, and support services to distance learners.

- Regular Check-Ins:



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Conduct regular virtual check-ins with distance learners to discuss academic progress, challenges, and goals. Use video conferencing, emails, or messaging platforms for communication.

- **Resource Guidance:**

Provide information on available resources, including online libraries, databases, and academic support services. Advise on how to access and utilize these resources effectively.

- **Online Workshops and Seminars:**

Organize online workshops or seminars on academic success skills, time management, and study strategies. Make resources available for self-directed learning.

- **Feedback and Evaluation:**

Solicit feedback from distance learners regarding the effectiveness of academic advising and use the feedback to enhance the quality of advising services.

- **Leverage Technology:**

Use technology platforms for virtual advising sessions, document sharing, and collaborative planning. Ensure that advisors are proficient in using technology tools.

4.1.3. Integration with Learning Management System (LMS) and MyNotes:

- Use the LMS and MyNotes to share resources, schedules, and announcements.

4.1.4. Training and Professional Development:

- Provide training and professional development opportunities for tutors and academic advisors. Keep them updated on effective online teaching strategies, communication skills, and emerging technologies. Encourage continuous improvement and skill development.

4.2 Foster a collaborative environment through discussion forums and virtual interactions.



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4.2.1. Integrate Discussion Forums into Courses:

- Include Discussion Forums in MyNotes:

Integrate discussion forums directly into the College's MyNotes communication platform. Ensure easy access for students within the course modules.

- Create Topic-Specific Forums:

Set up forums for different course topics or modules. Encourage focused discussions to enhance relevance and engagement.

4.2.2. Establish Clear Guidelines:

- Communicate Clear Expectations:

Provide guidelines on forum participation, etiquette, and expectations.

Clarify the importance of constructive and respectful communication.

- Define Participation Requirements:

Clearly define participation requirements, such as the number of posts, responses, and quality of contributions. Set expectations for timely and regular participation.

4.2.3. Encourage Diverse Perspectives:

- Create safe settings for students who hold or embody varied viewpoints and experiences, encouraging them to be brave in sharing their ideas and lived experiences.
- Encourage the formation of unique ideas and approaches as students develop their critical thinking and engagement skills.
- Incorporate a variety of methods to encourage diversity in practice. This may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - **Inclusive Course Content:** Ensure that the course material reflects diverse perspectives, cultures, and experiences. Incorporate readings, case studies, and examples from different regions, ethnicities, backgrounds and knowledge systems.
 - **Multimedia Resources:** Utilize diverse multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, and interactive simulations that feature a range of voices and representations.



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- **Collaborative Learning:** Encourage collaborative learning activities where students work in diverse groups to solve problems, discuss topics, or complete projects. This allows students to learn from each other's perspectives and experiences.
 - **Facilitated Discussions:** Host online discussions or forums where students can openly discuss diverse viewpoints on relevant topics. Provide guidelines for respectful communication and encourage active participation from all students.
 - **Cultural Sensitivity Training:** Offer resources or training sessions on cultural sensitivity and awareness to help students understand and respect different cultural norms, values, and practices.
 - **Guest Speakers:** Invite guest speakers from diverse backgrounds to share their expertise, experiences, and insights with the class. This exposes students to a variety of perspectives and helps them appreciate diversity.
 - **Flexible Assessment Methods:** Offer as far as possible various assessment methods that accommodate different learning styles and preferences. Allow students to choose project topics or formats that reflect their interests and cultural backgrounds.
 - **Diverse Learning Materials:** Incorporate various learning materials, including texts, visuals, and multimedia content, representing diverse cultures, traditions, histories and knowledge systems.
 - **Feedback and Reflection:** Encourage students to reflect on their own biases and assumptions through self-assessment activities or reflective writing assignments. Provide constructive feedback that promotes critical thinking and openness to diverse perspectives.
- **Assign Discussion Roles:**
Assign roles within discussions, such as a discussion leader or summarizer. Rotate roles to encourage different perspectives and leadership.
 - **Include Varied Discussion Formats:**
Incorporate diverse discussion formats, such as debates, case studies, or collaborative projects.
 - **Promote active engagement through varied activities.**



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4.2.4. Facilitate Instructor Participation:

- Active Instructor Presence:

Encourage instructors to actively participate and facilitate discussions. Share insights, ask questions, and guide conversations to enhance student engagement.

- Provide Timely Feedback:

Offer timely feedback on student contributions. Acknowledge valuable insights and provide constructive input to enhance learning.

4.2.5. Utilize Multimedia and Resources:

- Incorporate Multimedia Elements:

Encourage the use of multimedia elements like videos, images, and infographics in discussions. Enhance content variety and appeal to different learning preferences.

- Share Relevant Resources:

Share additional resources and readings related to discussion topics. Enrich discussions with supplementary materials.

4.2.6. Foster Peer Collaboration:

- Encourage Peer Review:

Facilitate peer review processes within discussions. Encourage students to provide constructive feedback on each other's contributions.

- Group Discussions and Projects:

Implement group discussions or collaborative projects. Foster teamwork and shared learning experience which may include transdisciplinary collaboration.

4.2.7. Time Flexibility and Accessibility:

- Accommodate Different Time Zones:



Consider asynchronous discussion options to accommodate students in different time zones. Allow, as far as possible, flexibility for participation based on individual schedules.

- **Mobile Accessibility:**

Ensure that discussion forums are accessible on mobile devices. Facilitate participation from various devices, promoting convenience.

4.2.8. Gamification Elements:

- **Incorporate Gamification where possible:**

Introduce gamification elements to discussions, such as badges or points for active participation. Motivate students to engage and contribute.

4.2.9. Provide Training and Support:

- **Offer Training on Effective Participation:**

Provide training on effective online communication and discussion participation. Address any technical or platform-related concerns.

- **Technical Support:**

Where possible, offer technical support for students encountering difficulties with the discussion platform. Ensure a smooth experience to minimize barriers to participation.

4.2.10. Regular Reflection and Evaluation:

- **Reflect on Discussion Dynamics:**

Encourage students to reflect on their discussion experiences. Seek feedback on what worked well and areas for improvement.

- **Evaluate Participation and Impact:**

Evaluate the overall impact of discussion forums on student learning. Use feedback to refine strategies for future courses.

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5. **BLENDED/HYBRID LEARNING:**

5.1 Develop courses that integrate both in-person and online components.

Developing blended or hybrid courses that seamlessly integrate both in-person and online components requires careful planning and instructional design. Key steps that must be followed to create effective blended courses are:

5.1.1. Define Learning Objectives:

- Clearly define the learning objectives or outcomes for the course. Identify which objectives are best suited for in-person interactions and which can be achieved online.

5.1.2. Identify Content and Activities:

- Determine the content and activities that will be covered in the in-person sessions.
- Identify content that can be effectively delivered online, such as lectures, discussions, or multimedia resources.

5.1.3. Choose Technology Tools:

- Select appropriate technology tools for online components, such as a Learning Management System (LMS) and MyNotes, video conferencing platforms, discussion forums, and collaboration tools. Ensure that chosen tools align with the learning objectives and are user-friendly.

5.1.4. Design In-Person Sessions:

- Plan interactive and engaging in-person sessions that complement online content.
- Use in-person time for activities that benefit from face-to-face interaction, such as group discussions, experiential activities, and collaborative projects.

5.1.5. Create Online Content:

- Develop online content that aligns with the learning objectives.
- Utilize multimedia elements, such as videos, interactive quizzes, and simulations, to enhance online engagement.

5.1.6. Foster Interaction and Collaboration:



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- Implement strategies to foster interaction and collaboration among students, both online and in person. Use discussion forums, group projects, and virtual meetings to facilitate online collaboration.

5.1.7. Establish a Consistent Schedule:

- Establish a consistent schedule for in-person and online components. Communicate the schedule to students to ensure they can plan accordingly.

5.1.8. Provide Clear Instructions:

- Communicate expectations and instructions for both in-person and online components.
- Provide guidelines on how to navigate online materials, participate in discussions, and complete assignments.

5.1.9. Incorporate Assessments:

- Integrate assessments that align with the learning objectives and course activities.
- Design assessments that evaluate both in-person and online learning experiences.

5.1.10. Offer Flexibility:

- Provide flexibility for students to engage with online components at their own pace. Consider asynchronous elements to accommodate diverse schedules and learning preferences.

5.1.11. Train Instructors:

- Train instructors on effective strategies for teaching in a blended format. Provide guidance on managing both in-person and online interactions.

5.1.12. Regularly Evaluate and Iterate:

- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the blended course design. Collect feedback from students and instructors to identify areas for improvement.



- Incorporate structured external peer review feedback to ensure the applicability and effectiveness of the course content, learning approach and assessment practices.

5.1.13. Encourage Reflective Practices:

- Encourage transformative learning experiences by incorporating self-reflection into the modules, where students may reflect on their learning in both in-person and online settings.
- Incorporate opportunities for self-assessment and goal setting.

5.1.14. Build a Supportive Community:

- Foster a supportive learning community by encouraging communication and collaboration among students. Use online discussion forums and group activities to build a sense of community.

5.2 Provide flexibility in accessing learning materials and engaging in collaborative activities. In a blended learning environment, this may be done in the following ways:

5.2.1. Online Communication Platform (MyNotes)

- Use MyNotes to host course materials, student engagement and formative as well as summative assessments. Ensure that MyNotes is user-friendly, accessible, and supports a variety of file formats.

5.2.2. Recorded Lectures and Resources:

- Record and provide access to lectures, presentations, and other instructional content.
- Offer downloadable resources, readings, and multimedia materials that students can access at their convenience.

5.2.3. Asynchronous Learning Opportunities:

- Design asynchronous activities that allow students to engage with course content at their own pace.
- Provide flexibility for students to review materials, participate in discussions, and complete assignments within designated time frames.



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5.2.4. Flexibility in Assessment Submission:

- Allow flexibility in assessment submission deadlines. Consider staggered deadlines for different components of a project to accommodate varied schedules.
- Expect students to take responsibility for their learning by communicating proactively with instructors regarding submission deadlines that they have difficulty meeting.

5.2.5. Virtual Consultation Hours:

- Conduct virtual consultation hours for one-on-one interactions between students and instructors. Use video conferencing tools to facilitate real-time discussions and address individual concerns.

5.2.6. Collaborative Online Tools:

- Integrate collaborative online tools for group projects and discussions, such as platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or dedicated collaborative tools to enhance teamwork.

5.2.7. Discussion Forums and Message Boards:

- Use discussion forums and message boards within MyNotes.
- Encourage ongoing asynchronous discussions where students can share ideas, ask questions, and engage in collaborative dialogue.

5.2.8. Synchronous Sessions:

- Schedule occasional synchronous sessions for live interactions. Use video conferencing for virtual class discussions, guest lectures, or interactive activities.

5.2.9. Accessible Technology:

- Ensure that all technology used in the course is accessible to students and as far as possible provide alternatives for students who may face technology-related challenges.

5.2.10. Mobile-Friendly Design:



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- Design course materials and activities to be mobile-friendly. This allows students to access content and participate in discussions using electronic devices.

5.2.11. Clear Communication Channels:

- Establish clear communication channels for announcements, updates, and important information. Use email, announcements within MyNotes, or other communication tools to keep students informed.

5.2.12. Personalized Learning Paths:

- Consider offering personalized learning paths based on students' progress and preferences - for example - providing options for students to explore additional resources or pursue advanced topics.

5.2.13. Transparent Expectations:

- Clearly communicate expectations regarding participation, deadlines, and collaborative activities.
- Ensure that students understand the flexibility built into the course design.

5.2.14. Regular Feedback:

- Provide regular and timely feedback on assessments. Use feedback as a tool for improvement and to guide future learning activities.

5.2.15. Training for Technology Use:

- Offer training sessions or resources to ensure that students are comfortable using the technology tools employed in the course. Address any technical concerns on the side of the College infrastructure and operations proactively.

5.2.16. Periodic Check-Ins:

- Conduct periodic check-ins with students to gather feedback on the course structure and format. Use insights to adjust and enhance the learning experience.

6. DISTANCE/ONLINE LEARNING:

- 6.1 Establish well-structured curricula with clear assessment deadlines. To achieve this:



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6.1.1. Define Learning Objectives:

- Clearly outline the learning objectives or outcomes for the course. What do you want students to achieve by the end of the course? Ensure that objectives/outcomes are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) and inclusive.

6.1.2. Break the Curriculum down:

- Divide the curriculum into modules or units based on the learning objectives/outcomes. Each module should have a clear focus and be in line with the descriptors for the specific level.

6.1.3. Develop Module Outlines:

- Create detailed outlines for each module, including key topics, readings, multimedia resources, and learning activities.
- Clearly articulate how each module contributes to the overall learning objectives.

6.1.4. Design Engaging Content:

- Develop engaging and interactive content for online delivery. This can include videos, presentations, readings, quizzes, and discussions.
- Use a variety of multimedia elements to cater to different learning styles.

6.1.5. Establish Assignment Guidelines:

- Clearly define assignment guidelines, including format, submission instructions, referencing and evaluation criteria.
- Provide rubrics for assessments to give students clear expectations.

6.1.6. Set Clear Deadlines:

- Establish clear deadlines for assignments, assessments, and other milestones. Communicate deadlines well in advance to allow for proper planning.

6.1.7. Provide a Course Calendar:

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- Create a course calendar that outlines the schedule of modules, assessments, and deadlines. Make the calendar easily accessible to students through their student guides and the MyNotes Communication Platform.

6.1.8. Incorporate Formative Assessments:

- Include formative assessments, such as quizzes, discussions, and short assignments, throughout the course to gauge student understanding.
- Provide timely feedback to help students improve.

6.1.9. Design Summative Assessments:

- Develop well-structured summative assessments, such as exams, essays, or projects, that align with the learning objectives.
- Communicate assessment criteria and expectations.
- Use a variety of assessment methods. Incorporate a mix of assessment methods to cater to different learning preferences and skills. Consider group projects, individual assignments, and practical assessments.

6.1.10. Ensure Accessibility:

- As far as possible, ensure that all course materials and assessments are accessible to students with disabilities. Provide alternative formats for content when necessary.

6.1.11. Foster Collaboration:

- Integrate collaborative activities and discussions into the curriculum.
- Use online tools to facilitate group work and peer collaboration.

6.1.12. Clarify Technical Requirements:

- Communicate technical requirements for the course, including software, hardware, and internet speed. Where possible, provide support or resources for students who may face technical challenges.

6.1.13. Encourage Time Management:

- Include guidance on time management and study skills. Help students develop strategies for organizing their schedules and meeting deadlines.



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6.1.14. Create an Academic Support System:

- Establish a support system for students, including access to instructors and tutors, online forums, and academic resources. Clearly communicate how students can seek help when needed.

6.1.15. Regularly Review and Update:

- Regularly review the curriculum based on student feedback, internal and external peer reviewer feedback, changes in the field, and advancements in technology.
- Update content, assessments, and activities to keep the curriculum current.

6.1.16. Provide Orientation and Training:

- Offer orientation sessions at the beginning of the course to familiarize students with the online platform, tools, and expectations. Address any concerns or questions students may have.

6.2 Ensure access to support services, including online tutoring and administrative assistance.

7. COURSE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY:

7.1 Allocate resources for the development and design of online/hybrid courses.

7.2 Train faculty members in effective online pedagogy and course development. The following aspects must receive attention:

7.2.1. Needs Assessment:

- Conduct a needs assessment to understand the existing knowledge and skills of faculty members regarding online pedagogy and course development. Identify specific areas where training is needed.

7.2.2. Provide Orientation:

- Offer an orientation session to introduce faculty to the principles and expectations of online teaching. Address common concerns and misconceptions about digital education.

7.2.3. Technology Training:



- Provide hands-on training on the use of relevant technologies, MyNotes, and other online tools. Ensure that faculty members are comfortable with the technical aspects of online teaching and have access to and are skilled in the necessary video editing software.

7.2.4. Best Practices in Online Teaching:

- Share best practices in online teaching, including strategies for engagement, effective communication, and building an online community. Provide examples of successful online courses for reference.

7.2.5. Active Learning Strategies:

- Train faculty on incorporating active learning strategies in the online environment. Explore methods such as discussion forums, group activities, virtual labs, collaborative and community projects.

7.2.6. Designing Engaging Content:

- Teach faculty how to design engaging and interactive online content. Explore the use of multimedia, interactive quizzes, videos, and simulations.

7.2.7. Accessibility Considerations:

- Emphasize the importance of designing courses with accessibility in mind. Provide guidance on creating content that is accessible to students with diverse needs.

7.2.8. Time Management and Workload:

- Address time management and workload considerations in online teaching. Share strategies for efficiently managing grading, feedback, and communication with students.

7.2.9. Strategies for Student Engagement:

- Discuss strategies for fostering student engagement in the online environment. Explore methods for promoting participation, collaboration, and discussion.

7.2.10. Effective Communication:

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- Train faculty on effective online communication, including the use of announcements, emails, and discussion forums. Emphasize the importance of clear and timely communication.

7.2.11. Assessment and Feedback:

- Provide guidance on designing effective assessments for online courses, making use of assessment grids provided to students well in advance. Train faculty on providing timely and constructive feedback to students.

7.2.12. Building a Community:

- Discuss methods for building a sense of community in the online classroom. Encourage faculty to create opportunities for student interaction and collaboration.

7.2.13. Addressing Technical Issues:

- Provide training on troubleshooting common technical issues that may arise during online teaching. Ensure faculty are aware of available technical support resources.

7.2.14. Continuous Professional Development:

- Encourage teaching staff to engage in continuous professional development in online education. Share resources to stay updated on emerging trends and technologies.

7.2.15. Peer Mentoring and Collaboration:

- Facilitate peer mentoring and collaboration among faculty members. Create opportunities for experienced online instructors to share insights and tips with their colleagues.

7.2.16. Feedback and Evaluation:

- Collect feedback from faculty regarding the effectiveness of training programs. Use feedback to make improvements and adjustments to future training initiatives.

7.2.17. Community of Practice:



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- Establish a community of practice where faculty members can share experiences, resources, and best practices in online teaching. Foster a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement.

8. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 8.1 Grant students access to necessary course materials and support services.
- 8.2 Encourage active adherence to academic policies.

9. FACULTY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 9.1 Provide professional development opportunities for faculty in online teaching.
- 9.2 Ensure timely feedback to students and adherence to institutional policies.

10. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION:

- 10.1 Establish a regular review process by the Academic Committee for online courses.
- 10.2 Use diverse assessment methods, including exams, assignments, and participation.

11. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT:

- 11.1 Communicate clear technical requirements to students.
- 11.2 Provide technical support for issues related to College equipment.

12. COPYRIGHT AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY:

- 12.1 Educate faculty and students on respecting copyright and intellectual property rights. This is crucial to ensure ethical and legal behavior in academic settings.

12.1.1. Incorporate Copyright Education in Orientation:

- Include information on copyright and intellectual property rights in faculty and student orientations.
- Provide an overview of the importance of respecting these rights in the academic environment.
- Organize workshops and training sessions on copyright and intellectual property rights. Cover topics such as fair use, permissions, licensing, and the proper citation of sources.

12.1.2. Develop Clear Policies:

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- Establish and communicate clear policies regarding copyright and intellectual property rights. Ensure that both faculty and students understand the consequences of violating these policies.

12.1.4. Provide Written Guidelines:

- Distribute written guidelines that outline the institution's expectations regarding copyright and intellectual property. Offer examples and scenarios to illustrate best practices.

12.1.5. Highlight Fair Use Principles:

- Emphasize the principles of fair use and how they apply to educational settings. Help faculty and students understand the circumstances under which copyrighted materials can be used without permission.

12.1.6 Encourage Open Access and Creative Commons:

- Promote the use of open-access materials and Creative Commons-licensed content. Educate faculty and students on how to find and properly attribute open educational resources.

12.1.7. Provide Citation Guidelines:

- Offer guidelines on proper citation practices for various types of sources. Teach faculty and students how to cite digital and printed sources to avoid plagiarism.

12.1.8. Demonstrate the use of Plagiarism Detection Tools:

- Introduce plagiarism detection tools (Turnitin) that can help faculty identify instances of potential copyright infringement. Train faculty on how to use these tools ethically and responsibly.

12.1.9. Promote a Culture of Respect:

- Foster a culture of respect for intellectual property rights within the academic community. Highlight the role of originality and ethical conduct in academic and creative pursuits.





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13. REVISION AND UPDATES:

14.1 Schedule regular reviews of the digital learning policy to align with best practices and legislative changes.

14. COMPLIANCE AND MAINTENANCE:

14.1 Assign responsibility to the Management of Hugonote Kollege for policy implementation.

14.2 Establish a reporting mechanism for concerns or violations related to the policy.

