



**SHAHEED BENAZIR BHUTTO WOMEN UNIVERSITY PESHAWAR**

**ONLINE EDUCATION POLICY**

**1. RATIONALE**

This policy is formulated to prepare the systems of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar (SBBWUP) to be able to offer effective online teaching as a substitute for regular classes in these extraordinary circumstances in wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic. SBBWUP is committed to provide quality education regardless of the delivery format. This policy focuses specifically on the best practices and strategies for online course delivery either in synchronous or asynchronous mode.

This policy is additionally designed to assist SBBWUP, in wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic, in the fulfillment of its educational mission and role in accordance with all applicable Statutes, rules and regulations already promulgated by the University.

**2. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives to formulate this policy are:

- i. To ensure continuation of the academic activities using online resources, and that the impact of the necessary disruption on the students' learning is minimized.
- ii. To protect the quality of teaching from being compromised.
- iii. To streamline the internal processes of online teaching and learning environment through the provision of improved digital means including IT infrastructure, training of teaching faculty and library online readiness.
- iv. To streamline the process of students' online access and to adjudicate students' problems if any.

**3. SCOPE**

This Online Education Policy shall apply to all the departments of SBBWUP in the delivery of online education.

**4. COMMENCEMENT OF ONLINE EDUCATION POLICY**

This Online Education Policy of SBBWUP will be implemented after the approval of OAC with immediate effect as long as these unusual circumstances of COVID-19 will continue to persist OR as per notifications/orders of the Government on the same.

**5. DEFINITIONS OF POSSIBLE MODES OF DELIVERY**

- i. Online/virtual education is defined as a delivery of educational courses and programs which uses a wide range of educational and telecommunication

technologies including satellite and web-based technologies which incorporates learning management systems with synchronous and/or asynchronous modes of communication. This mode of delivery requires special techniques of online/virtual course design and grounded instructional techniques to enhance online/virtual students learning outcomes, as well as special organization and administrative arrangements.

- ii. Asynchronous Communication Asynchronous Communication is a mode of telecommunications in which a simultaneous presence of individuals is not required for communication to take place. Examples are e-mail, discussion forums, text messaging, and recordings. With these technologies, students can communicate at their own pace using web-based tools such as online Chat and web conferencing.
- iii. Synchronous Communication Synchronous Communication is a mode of scheduled direct telecommunication in which a simultaneous presence of individuals is required for communication to take place. Examples are web-based tools such as online Chat and web conferencing.
- iv. Cyber Security: As per University office order No. 5232/Estt./SBBWUP/2017 dated 21-11-2017, In the wake of National Action Plan (NAP) and on directives of the Security Agencies as communicated by HEC for maintaining Network/Info. Security, provision of information by the Head/ Incharges / Coordinators of the Departments to IT Centre on regular basis through official medium about the students, who fail to promote, leave University, migrate, freeze their semester, complete their session or as and when required. Any of the illegal usage (email/internet) by any not reported or those students who left the University will be the sole responsibility of the Coordinator of the Departments.

## **6. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

Technical Committee shall comprise of the following:

1. Registrar Convener
  2. Controller of Examinations
  3. BS Coordinator
  4. Dr. Neelam Goher  
Asst. Prof. Department of Computer Science
  5. Deputy Director IT
- Facilitators / Executive Bench**
1. Deputy Director QEC
  2. Deputy Registrar Affiliation & Monitoring
  3. Deputy Registrar Admissions
  4. Deputy Librarian
  5. Deputy Registrar Academics

### **6.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE OF TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

The Technical Committee shall be responsible to:

1. Provide instructions / guidelines to the faculty to prepare / design course contents for online delivery.
2. Forward the ready courses to Academic Section for approval in consultancy with the HoD/ Incharge as per Form-I. (**Appendix-1**)
3. Access and troubleshoot issues that faculty might encounter.
4. Provide access to faculty members for LMS accounts so they may register their students in courses.
5. Initiate a mechanism to address issues faced by students and faculty in consultancy with Online Academic Council.

## **7. COMPOSITION OF ONLINE ACADEMIC COUNCIL (OAC)**

The Online Academic Council (OAC) shall comprise of the following:

1. Existing Academic Council
2. The following co opted members:
  - i. Prof. Dr. Zia Qayyum  
Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad.
  - ii. Dr. Muhammad Mohsin Khan  
Director, Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar.
  - iii. Dr. Saleem ur Rehman  
Vice Chancellor, Sarhad University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar.
- a. **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF ONLINE ACADEMIC COUNCIL (OAC)**

The Online Academic Council Shall:

1. Approve online courses, teaching faculty and, online resources, to be placed on LMS.
2. Certify that University has a fully functional and updated Learning Management System where all teaching faculty of a course, course contents and students have been registered and digital binding has been done.
3. Certify that HODs/departments have well prepared their online courses as per the instructions prescribed by the Technical Committee/IT policy and that they are available to students through LMS/ software.
4. Ensure that the faculty members teaching online course(s) have received relevant and mandatory trainings.
5. Certify that the resource bank and online library has all the relevant material (recorded lectures, videos, notes, research papers, seminars, case studies, etc.) in its system all this is easily available to both the faculty as well as students.
6. Certify that the faculty and students have access to the relevant software(s) required for online education and all the required infrastructure for this purpose has been established.

7. Solicit student feedback on the performance of the course.
8. Certify that assessment and evaluation system for online courses is in place in line with the guidelines issued by HEC.
9. Certify that instructions and guidelines about laboratory and practice-related courses as issued by the HEC or relevant accreditation bodies are implemented in true letter and spirit.

## **7.2. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR ONLINE ACADEMIC COUNCIL TO CERTIFY COURSE AS READY FOR ONLINE DELIVERY**

1. Faculty will design and prepare the course as per instructions / guidelines of the Technical Committee and present to the HoD.
2. The HoD will ensure that all HEC requirements have been met by the faculty members and recommends, in consultancy with the Technical Committee, for approval.
3. The Dean will initiate it to the OAC for a decision.
4. The OAC will forward the data and approval on a case to case basis.
5. In case of problem, the HoD and faculty members shall address the problem(s).
6. If the HoD and/or faculty member obtain approval through misappropriation of facts, action shall be initiated against them.

### **3. ONLINE COURSE**

The curriculum and instruction of online/virtual courses shall be fully comparable in rigor to the same curriculum delivered on the SBBWUP campus. The following information shall be provided to the students ahead of time:

- i. The course introduction,
  - ii. The learning objectives,
  - iii. The evaluation/ grading policy,
  - iv. Course prerequisites (if any),
  - v. Course requirement or rules (if any),
  - vi. The textbooks or other required readings,
  - vii. The key dates, the time and venue (physical or virtual) of class meetings,
  - viii. The lesson plan (together with the assigned readings for each lecture),
  - ix. The assignments, and if possible any PPTs or handouts.
- The OAC (or equivalent body) shall ensure that all these conditions have been met before authorizing an online course

### **4. FACULTY**

Online teaching has completely different characteristics and requirements from face to face teaching. Factors determining the readiness of faculty include the following:

1. Faculty members who will offer online instruction must take a training course (online of course) on this subject.

2. **Faculty members must be prepared to start online classes in all respects e.g. that they have to install all technical software they need and they must know how to use them.**
3. **Faculty members must be able to provide resource bank/ reading material to the students of their relevant course**
4. As part of good practice, faculty members may be requested to do a dry run of the course to test the system for any unforeseen problems.
  - The OAC (or equivalent body) shall satisfy itself that a faculty member desirous of teaching an online course has passed such a training program.

## **5. LIBRARY**

It shall be the responsibility of university to:

1. Enable students to access not only the course material (through the LMS), but also all required readings and associated materials (optional readings, audiovisual materials, or literature or data needed for course-related research) through a library or resource center.
2. Assure students' access electronically, either through HEC's digital library subscription or through standalone arrangements.
  - The OAC (or equivalent body) shall certify that the resource bank and library system is online ready.

## **6. TECHNOLOGY**

It shall be the responsibility of university to:

Have necessary arrangements made to have mandatory IT facilities including technological packages and infrastructure to ensure successful online delivery including the software for LMS, classroom meetings (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Classroom, etc.), examination systems, and so on.

- The OAC (or equivalent body) should certify that the university has access to the relevant software and infrastructure, has made it available to all students and faculty members, and arranged tech support through the OIT or otherwise for trouble shooting as needed.

## **7. STUDENTS**

1. It shall be ensured that all participants will be able to access the course from their homes or other venues.
2. There shall be an introductory arrangement with the students before the start of a course.
3. In order to obtain full information on the complaints faced by the students and to resolve the issues the university has constituted "Grievance Committee" (GC).
4. The Grievance Committee will comprise of the following:
  - i. All HoDs / Incharges

- ii. BS Coordinator (For BS Programs)
- iii. Director Advance Studies and Research Board (for Master, M/Phil & Ph.D)
- iv. Deputy Director QEC

**b. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE**

- 1. Receive complaints from participants regarding online course delivery.
- 2. Investigate received complaints.
- 3. Respond to complaints from participants in a timely manner;
- 4. Inform relevant personnel to address and resolve the issue raised, if deemed justifiable and feasible.
- 5. Report the complaint data to OAC.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**1. Dean.**

- i. Ensure the courses being offered for online education fulfill the requirements and standards set by the HEC/University for online education. A certificate signed by HOD and countersigned by respective Dean will be submitted to Online Academic Council (OAC).
- ii. Ensure that the course repositories and the pedagogies being followed are in line with International/HEC/University online and assessment standards.
- iii. Regular feedback about availability and suitability of Course Repositories from HODs / incharges/ Coordinators.

**2. HODs/ Incharges/ Coordinators of Departments.**

HODs/Incharges/ Coordinators of Departments will:-

- i. Ensure that the concerned resource person has prepared herself efficiently and effectively for the course to be delivered through synchronous or asynchronous modes.
- ii. Develop and maintain departmental internal mechanism to monitor the efficient and effective online delivery of the course as per the schedule.
- iii. Ensure that course packs are well prepared as per the guidelines provided by Technical Committee.
- iv. Ensure that all relevant material, quizzes, assignments and course packs of every course are timely uploaded on LMS.
- v. Ensure that students are attending the classes online and are receiving the relevant material.
- vi. Keep Liaison with IT Section for the related issues.
- vii. Maintain the data base of students of respective courses along with their contact details.
- viii. Ensure online posting of courses through E-registration system.

- ix. Ensure that student's queries and complaints, if any, are timely entertained.
- x. Coordinate with teachers and students and monitor the overall process of online teaching.
- xi. Closely monitor the effective delivery and feedback of students including their locations, IT/internet service quality and availability/access to the Course Repositories.
- xii. Submit weekly online teaching activities / performance reports to QEC and Monitoring Section.

### **3. Information Technology Centre (ICT).**

- i. Ensure the availability of relevant hardware and software required for effective and efficient online teaching.
- ii. Ensuring all time functioning of LMS and its accessibility to faculty as well as the students.
- iii. Maintenance and security of repositories as well as exams and new admissions etc.
- iv. Ensure making necessary arrangements for training of faculty on LMS, relevant software(s) and online teaching and its application for online teaching.
- v. Ensure the digital binding of all the faculty members with their respective courses (which they are teaching) and students (to whom they are teaching).
- vi. Update the daily status of students, faculty and course registration details.

### **4. Library.**

- i. Librarian shall ensure that library system is online ready and students' needs are met electronically, either through HEC's digital library subscription or through SBBWUP standalone arrangements.
- ii. Library shall maintain online data base of material appropriate for online courses along with associated material (optional readings, audiovisual materials, or literature or data needed for course-related research) so that students can access online. In this regard librarian may ask departments to identify and prepare materials appropriate for their respective courses and submit to Library in Soft form.

### **5. Academics Section.**

- i. Formulate a comprehensive policy to start online teaching effectively.
- ii. Develop a mechanism / constitute a Grievance Committee to compile the data regarding any complaints or suggestions by students or faculty and send to concerned department for necessary action.
- iii. Academic Section, shall maintain the data of online courses certified by OAC.

### **6. Affiliations & Monitoring Section.**

- i. Monitor the attendance of students in the classes in coordination with the teachers and ICT.
- ii. Ensure that courses are properly delivered /completed as per the schedule.
- iii. Ensure the delivered courses are approved from the OAC as are delivered.

**7. Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC).**

- i. Provide technical training to HoDs and faculty for online teaching.
- ii. Obtain weekly online teaching performance activities indicating the effectiveness, complete delivery and students' feedback from respective HODs / incharges.
- iii. Monitor overall online readiness and delivery of teaching and learning process in the University in coordination with Academic Section & ICT.
- iv. Monitor the adherence of all quality parameters for online (education) teaching in the university as per HEC standards.

**8. Examination Section.**

- i. Based on the HEC guidelines, Controller of Examinations shall prepare an Online Exam/Assessment Policy in coordination with QEC and ICT.
- ii. The Exam/Assessment Policy shall be presented by Controller of Examinations in the Online Academic Council (OAC) meeting as and when necessary.
- iii. Assessment Instructions to be issued to all HoDs / incharges well before the conduct of Exams.
- iv. Examinations Section shall prepare timely results for promotion of existing students and the enrollment of new students in coordination with all the departments and Admission Section.

**NOTE:**

This policy needs to be circulated/communicated to all stakeholders (students, faculty members and all concerned academic and administrative staff), through LMS/emails, and putting it on SBBWUP website. This policy will be made a part of the main SBBWUP policies after getting through the relevant statutory bodies, for its approval.