

**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**  
**BENIN CITY, NIGERIA**



**Teaching, Learning and  
Assessment Policy  
Framework**

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***The Quality of An Education System Cannot Exceed the Quality of its Teachers<sup>1</sup>***

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.0.1 Pedagogy refers to the way of teaching students, whether it is the theory or practice of educating. It is a relationship between the culture and techniques of learning. The main aim of pedagogy is to build on previous learning of the students and work on the development of skills and attitudes of the learners. Pedagogy enables the students to get a thorough understanding of the subject and helps them in applying those learnings in their daily lives outside of the classroom.
- 1.0.2 University of Benin (UNIBEN) is committed to continuous improvement of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) with a student-centered learning environment. The objective is for students studying at UNIBEN to gain excellent knowledge, understanding and skills which will lead to successful completion of their studies, meaningful and sustainable employment, progression to Further or Higher Education and a commitment to lifelong learning.
- 1.0.3 This policy framework supports the standards and practices identified in UNIBEN's Mission Statement and Strategic Plans. It aligns with the Vision of the University of Benin which is *to be a model institution of higher learning which ranks among the best in the world and which is responsive to the creative and innovative abilities of the Nigerian people*. A key strategic goal of the University is to *increase the academic growth of the University by ensuring full accreditation of all its academic courses, and increasing academic and research outputs, with increased ranking of the University, overall*.
- 1.0.4 The framework sets out expectations underpinning the design, delivery, and assessment of all undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses within the University and its partner institutions. It seeks to ensure that there is parity of student experience and that rigorous assessment practices are employed to maintain appropriate academic standards.
- 1.0.5 The framework should be read alongside all relevant UNIBEN regulations, policies and procedures relating to Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> Barber, M, Mourshed, M. *How the World's Best-Performing School Systems Come Out on Top*. McKinsey & Company (September 2007), 13

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY FRAMEWORK**

In pursuit of the realization of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) of UNIBEN, this policy framework seeks to:

- provide a framework within which UNIBEN can design strategies, procedures and methods to satisfy the needs of students undertaking undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
- maintain and enhance the quality of the student learning experience in the context of the University's mission and strategic priorities.
- encourage a developmental culture for TLA and adequate means for the assurance of high and improving standards.
- equip UNIBEN students with the necessary subject knowledge, skills, attributes, and confidence to enter employment, undertake further study and play a constructive and creative role in society throughout their lives.
- enhance teacher effectiveness by supporting the role of the lecturer as a manager and facilitator of students' learning.
- support and encourage a shift from didactic teaching to methods that encourage the progressive development of independent learners, with attainment standards for personal and transferable skills as well as subject knowledge.
- address the quality assurance and monitoring strategies which apply to all undergraduates and taught postgraduate programmes in UNIBEN.

## **3.0 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES:**

- University of Benin Quality Assurance Policy  
[https://www.unibenqa.org/quality/our\\_quality\\_codes/](https://www.unibenqa.org/quality/our_quality_codes/)
- Academic Regulations and Teachers Code  
<https://www.unibenqa.org/resource/resources/>
- Student – Centered Learning Policy
- Teaching Staff Development Policy
- Internal Processes For Developing New Programmes & Reviewing Existing Ones.
- UNIBEN Health Policy<sup>2</sup>

## **4.0 SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

This policy applies to all role players in aspects of teaching, learning and assessment at UNIBEN, and specifically to:

- the student,
- the lecturer,
- the teaching, learning and assessment environment,
- teaching, learning and assessment management, financing, and support.

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<sup>2</sup>This policy is under review

## **5.0 PRINCIPLES FOR COURSE DESIGN AND DELIVERY**

- 5.0.1 The design and delivery of a course should be informed by the gaps identified by students, the industry, the needs of government, Academic Planning Directorate, external regulators such as the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC), professional bodies, ranking induced, competitors, or global changing environment and preferences. It is required that the process be guided by relevant Quality Assurance frameworks and professional standards. Leveraging pedagogical research, course lecturers should consider developments within industry and/or professional practice to ensure that employability is incorporated into the curriculum.
- 5.0.2 To enhance the quality of students' learning, course designs should also comprise contemporary approaches – this includes the use of relevant digital learning technologies.
- 5.0.3 A coherent strategy for teaching, learning and assessment should be agreed by course lecturers and communicated to students accordingly.
- 5.0.4 All course provision should be inclusive and non-discriminatory so that all students have similar opportunities to be involved in the learning process and to demonstrate achievement of the associated learning outcomes. Thus, course lecturers should be deliberate about facilitating students' academic and personal development.
- 5.0.5 Individual reasonable adjustments should be made to support the needs of students with needs which are not able to be pre-empted or anticipated (for example because of a disability, health condition or specific learning difficulty), in accordance with the University's health policy.
- 5.0.6 All courses should be designed to include learning opportunities that are engaging, motivational and challenging, encouraging higher order cognitive skills, critical thinking and deeper learning. Courses should therefore be designed with the objective of promoting students' autonomy of learning and thinking with a view to making informed decisions for their future career and personal progression.
- 5.0.7 Learning outcomes should be clearly defined for each module, level of study and course, so that students, staff and other relevant stakeholders are clear about what students are expected to be able to do on completion of the relevant block of study and how each module contributes to the overall course learning outcomes.

5.0.8 The Faculty (Internal) Quality Assurance Teams (IQATs) should ensure that all learning activities and assessments are aligned with the learning outcomes.

5.0.9 Staff and students must keep to the times scheduled for the contact periods.<sup>3</sup> The breakdown of contact hours should be clearly outlined in each module specification. Students should be provided with clear schedules for their planned contact time and for the related assessment(s) for each module, year of study and overall course, to enable them to plan and manage their own study activities.

5.0.10 The University and/or relevant partner institution should maintain an appropriate learning environment for students, with particular attention to:

- the provision of appropriate teaching spaces, practical workspaces and equipment;
- where relevant, the provision of appropriate, well-resourced, and supported workplace learning environments;
- access to appropriate digital technologies, including wireless connectivity on campus and remote access to resources and services;
- the provision of appropriate student support and guidance, including access to specialist study-related support services.

## **6.0 TEACHING AND LEARNING**

6.0.1 Aligning with UNIBEN's TLA Strategy and based on good established pedagogic principles, course deliveries should be well structured and engaging within the allocated time.

6.0.2 Teaching and Learning activities should deploy visual and audio (technological) support with a view to effectively meeting the learning objectives.

6.0.3 Course lecturers should develop collaborative learning approaches that help build partnerships between staff and students, to increase student engagement and success. Enabling students to become active members of a learning community promotes their development as independent learners who recognise and take responsibility for their own learning.

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<sup>3</sup> Contact periods include times scheduled for lectures, assessments, tutorials, practicals and meetings with project supervisors.

- 6.0.4 Course lecturers should endeavour to make effective use of expertise from across and outside the University or partner institution to enhance the student experience. This may involve links to industry, clinical practice and the community. This also includes the use of mentors in work-based learning.
- 6.0.5 Academic staff are expected to serve as models to students and maintain a professional approach to their activities and demonstrate commitment to their area(s) of expertise and its value system and to their own active and ongoing professional development.

## **7.0 ASSESSMENT**

- 7.0.1 All assessment processes should be carried out in accordance with the University's assessment regulations, policies and procedures. Student – Centered learning is important in developing and implementing the processes.
- 7.0.2 Information on assessment should be clear and easily accessible to students. Information should comprise: – assessment title – weighting as percentage of total module assessment – module learning outcomes assessed – hand-out date and submission deadline – submission procedure – expected feedback dates turnaround time – assessment aims – assessment guidelines giving clear and specific information on the task, associated word count (or equivalent) limits and any special presentation requirements – marking criteria linked to learning outcomes.
- 7.0.3 Assessment should be designed to evaluate students' academic progress – it should objectively judge students' theoretical and practical competence in a particular course/ module.
- 7.0.4 Consideration should be given to the planning and scheduling of assessments to provide balanced workloads across the students' study time and to avoid over-assessment.
- 7.0.5 To promote autonomy of learning, innovative assessment approaches should be introduced in a considered manner, with the welfare of the students in mind, and should be explicitly evaluated, including through the consideration of student feedback.
- 7.0.6 As much as practicable, courses should include opportunities for students to work and be assessed in groups.

- 7.0.7 In designing assessment tasks, course lecturers should consider how to discourage academic misconduct such as plagiarism. In addition to the use of online tools to detect plagiarism and collusion, this could be achieved by requiring responses that relate to the individuals' own situation, or by the inclusion of an assessment that is carried out under tutor supervision.
- 7.0.8 Word count limits (or equivalent) should be used to give students a clear indication of the minimum and maximum acceptable length of a piece of assessed work. The word count should include the main body of the text (including quotations, in-text citations, footnotes, tables, diagrams and graphs), but not reference lists, bibliographies or appendices. Students should be made aware that not meeting the minimum word count or exceeding the maximum word count will affect the academic judgement of the piece of work and may result in the award of a lower mark.
- 7.0.9 Students should be provided with appropriate advice, guidance, and support with their coursework assessments (which includes students' long essays/projects) and examination preparation.

## 7.1 Assessment submission

- 7.1.1. Course lecturers should require students to submit assessed work online to subject the work to plagiarism test. The online submission process should be clearly documented for transparency and understanding of the process by staff and students.
- 7.1.2 Where online submission is not practicable, assessments may be submitted manually but *must* be subjected to plagiarism test. Work submitted late without approval given by the course lecturer will be subject to a penalty.

## 7.2 Marking and feedback

- 7.2.1 Marking criteria/scheme should be clearly outlined to ensure objectivity and consistency of approach. The University's generic marking criteria<sup>4</sup> provides a framework within which course lecturers can develop their own marking criteria relevant to the level, subject areas and assessment types offered.
- 7.2.2 Within **four working weeks**(unless otherwise communicated)of the submission deadline, students should be provided with timely, detailed

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<sup>4</sup> 70% for examination and 30% for assessments.



and constructively critical feedback on coursework (based on the learning outcomes and relevant marking criteria) to promote learning from their assessment experience.

7.2.4 Written feedback may be supplemented with oral feedback and additional academic tutorial support, where appropriate. Tutorial support is important and must be made available for any referred or deferred student.

## **8.0 STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT**

8.0.1 Effective TLA practices are predicated upon a mutually supportive environment where staff and students work together to form a learning community focused on developing, implementing, and rewarding best practices.<sup>5</sup>

8.0.2 Collaboration between academic and non-academic staff at UNIBEN should be encouraged to provide positive student experiences and exploration of new and innovative approaches to TLA.

8.0.3 All academic staff in UNIBEN should engage annually in a University Peer Review Workshop (UPRW) where pedagogic challenges and opportunities encountered in the previous session are discussed, and strategies for the next session are planned. The UPRW workshop may also comprise a capacity enhancement training.

8.0.4 Academic staff are encouraged to continually engage with relevant professional activities. New academic staff within the University or those without a relevant teaching in higher education qualification will be required to complete a certificate course in pedagogy. **Details regarding this section are provided in the Policy on Academic Staff Development.**

8.0.5 To promote scholarly practice and a contemporary knowledge-based learning for students, academic staff are also encouraged to engage in research, scholarly activity and/or professional practice commensurate with their teaching responsibilities.

## **9.0 STRATEGIES FOR IDENTIFYING, AND DISSEMINATING INNOVATIVE BEST PRACTICES**

9.0.1 During staff development trainings discussed in section 8.0 above, good

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<sup>5</sup>Refer generally to UNIBEN Quality Assurance Best Practices Handbook  
<https://www.unibenqa.org/resource/resources/>

pedagogic practices should be shared. Such practices may border on:

- Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy
- Digital teaching methods
- Tutorials
- Lessons judged as effective with significant good practice
- Managing practical sessions safely
- Staff Development Strategy (including Professional Development Strategy)
- Support for students

9.0.2 Where staff attend external events they are encouraged to disseminate the information across teams as relevant.

9.0.3 Where appropriate, use internal specialists to develop specific skills amongst specific individuals and teams, one such mechanism is the use of peer observation.

9.0.4 Deployment of a Professional Development team to prevent poor practice should be established. This can take many forms and all issues are approached on an individual basis to ensure resultant impact.

9.0.5 Where a member of teaching staff is observed to be excelling in teaching/ learning skills, a professional discussion should take place to explore how they can further develop their practice. Where however a staff member requires support in this regard, targeted intervention should be put in place to support the individual staff member.

9.0.6 The University may use a range of methods to recognise good practices, such as personal congratulations from the Vice Chancellor as well as staff news and successes being routinely shared.

## **10.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT**

10.0.1 Course design, delivery and assessment practices will be subject to regular monitoring and review by IQATs. This should include the identification of approaches to TLA that are found to be particularly effective and their dissemination within the University and beyond, in the interests of ever promoting the sharing of good practices.

10.0.2 The IQATs will bring to the attention of the Directorate of Quality Assurance any issues regarding the assessment process of a course before External Quality Assurance occurs.

## 11.0 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW OF POLICY FRAMEWORK

11.0.1 Responsibility for the Policy lies with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academics.

11.0.2 Monitoring of the implementation of the Policy lies with each Faculty Board, chaired by the Dean of a Faculty.

11.0.3 The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy Framework must be reviewed every three years or before, if there are fundamental issues to be reviewed.

## 12.0 REFERENCES

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