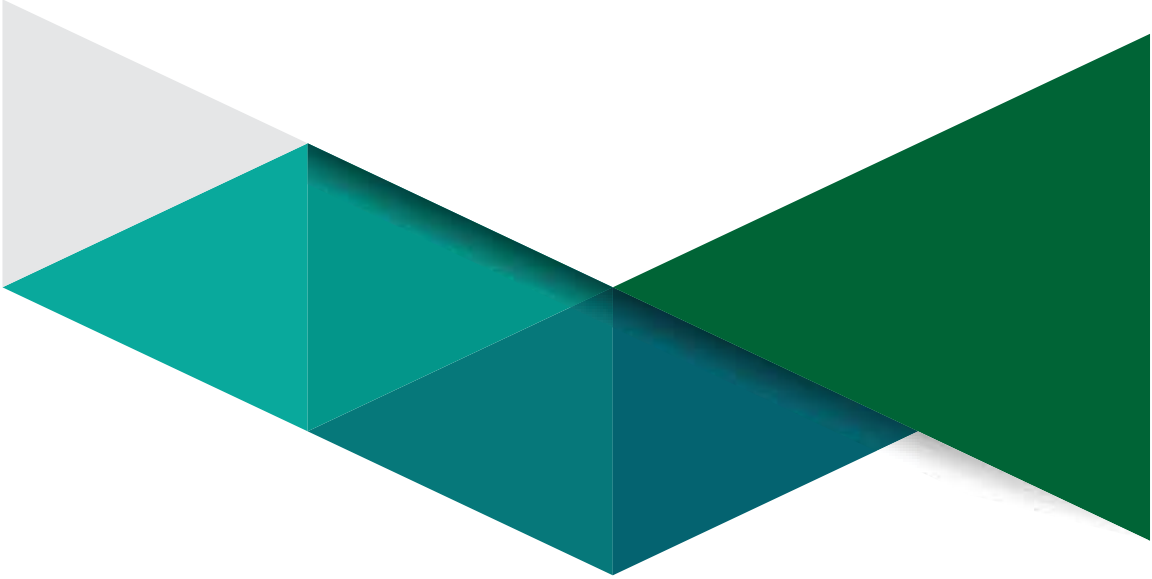


UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA

The University for National Unity, The U of A of Nigeria!
Main Campus, P. M.B. 117, Abuja, Nigeria

**CENTRE FOR DISTANCE LEARNING
AND CONTINUING EDUCATION (CDL&CE)**



UNIABUJA

OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING (ODL) POLICY

SEPTEMBER, 2021



UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA

The University for National Unity, The UofA of Nigeria!

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UniAbuja e-Learning Strategic Policy Document
(Approved by the University of Abuja Governing Council)

FOREWORD

This policy is a practical and action-oriented guide that has been developed to provide a strategic direction for the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education (CDL&CE). It specifies the actions to be taken to achieve the objectives of the Centre, given the international and context of its operations.

One of the main reasons for delivering training via Open and Distance Learning (ODL) is to make education accessible, flexible, and learner-centered to large numbers of educational people. This makes access possible to those who cannot attend conventional academic institutions due to social, structural, or personal situations such as lack of placement in educational institutions, distance from educational institutions and absence of specific programmes, family commitments, and the need to continue earning salaries for self-supporting in school.

The University of Abuja is committed to ensuring access, quality e-Learning in all programmes delivered via Open and Distance Learning while leveraging Technology to mediate learning and the delivery of the distance learning programmes. This policy is therefore built on the lessons of the past and the need for a road map that will bring a much improved ODL at the CDL&CE of the University Abuja. It will also address the key objectives of the University of Abuja holistically.

I am confident that this policy document will help the CDL&CE to manage e-Learning processes better, plan for change and improvement through a systematic approach, and adapt processes based on new information technology applications and platforms. It will foster better

communication and collaboration within and outside the University Community. In addition, the operationalisation of this policy framework will help the Centre to optimize the organizational system and structures, provide guidance to management for day-to-day operations. It will also enable the Centre to assess progress in the set goals and provide a framework for monitoring and evaluation, leading to improvement in the implementation of the ODL policy issues in the University.

Professor Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah

Vice-Chancellor,
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Nigeria.

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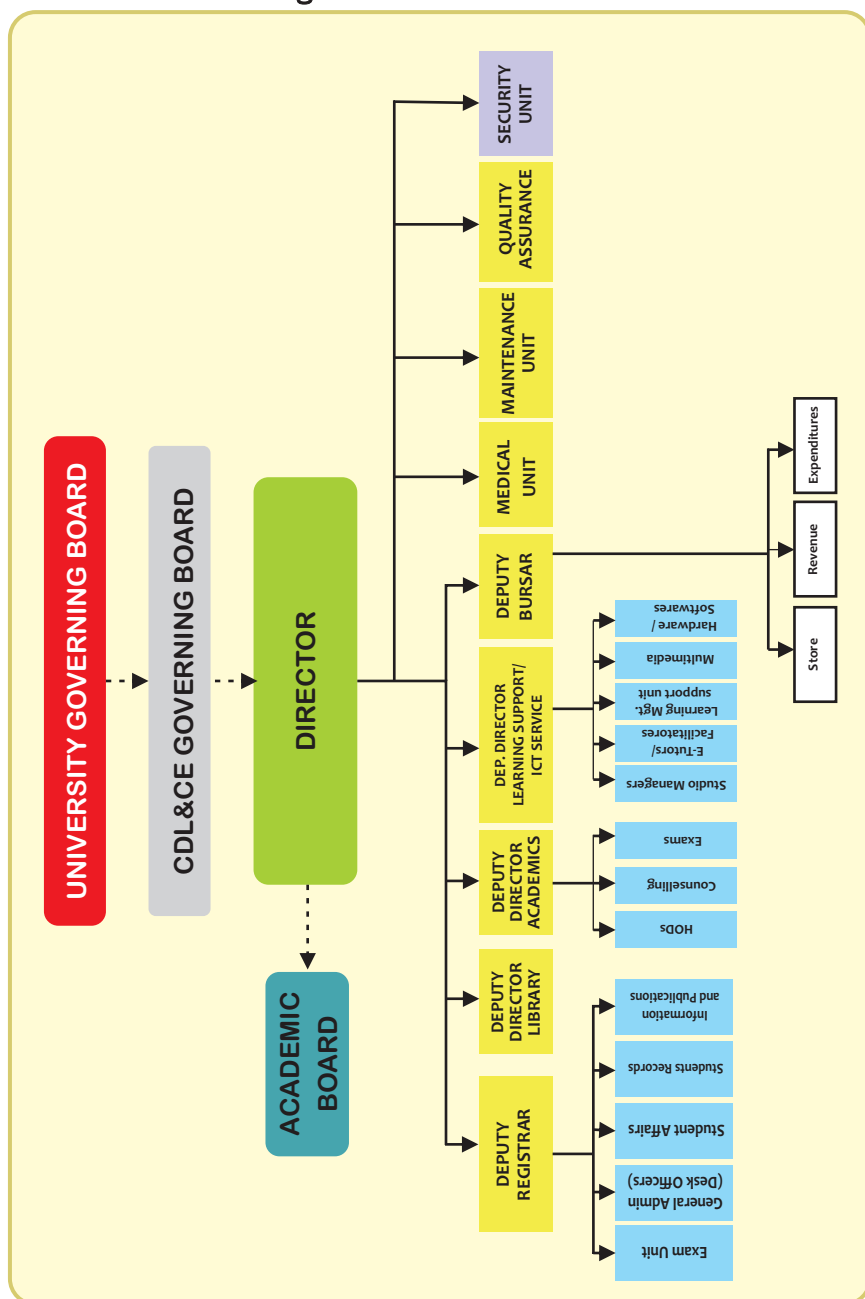
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The members of CDL&CE Policy Board include the following:

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11.	Prof. Ya'u M. Damagun	Director, Academic Planning Unit	Member
12.	Prof. Owolabi Olumide	Director, ITMS	Member

UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA

Centre For Distance Learning And Continuing Education Organisational Structure



UNIABUJA OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

S/N	Framework	Implementation
1	Policy Title	Open and Distance Learning Policy.
2	Purpose of Policy	The UniAbuja ODL Policy is geared towards enhancing accessibility, increasing relevance, and ensuring high quality learning outcomes.
3	Policy Development	University Governing Council & Members of CDL&CE Policy Board.
4	Policy Implementers	Members of CDL&CE Management
5	Policy Administrator	Director, Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education.
6	Policy Implementation Date	September, 2016.
7	Policy Implementation:	
	i. Overall	Director, Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education.
	ii. Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputy Directors • Staff of the Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education • Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education Academic Board (CDL&CEAB). • Faculties and Academic Departments
	iii. Staff Training and Development	Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education in Collaboration with Information Technology Management System (ITMS) and Registry Units.
	iv. Quality Assurance and Control	National Universities Commission (NUC) Benchmark and Minimum Academic Standard, Academic Planning Unit, UniAbuja Directorate of Quality Assurance Control and SERVICOM Unit.
	v. Technical and Pedagogical Quality	Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education.
	vi. Academic Quality	Faculties and Academic Departments
	vii. Policy Advice	Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education Governing Board.

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

AIC	- Applicants Induction Course
BMAS	- Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard
CC	- Creative Common
CD	- Compact Disc
CDL&CE	- Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education
CMA	- Computer Marked Assessment
CMC	- CDL&CE Management Committee
CMD	- Course Materials Development
COL	- Commonwealth of Learning
DLLO	- Distance Learners Learning Outcomes
DVD	- Digital Video Disc
HND	- Higher National Diploma
IAG	- Information, Advice, And Guidance
ICT	- Information and Communication Technology
IESBL	- ICT Enabled Supported Blended Learning Model
ILR	- Interactive Learning Resources
ITMS	- Information Technology Management System
ITQs	- In-Text Questions
LMS	- Learning Management System
MMS	- Multimedia Messaging Service
NCE	- National Certificate of Education
ND	- National Diploma
NPE	- National Policy on Education
NUC	- National Universities Commission
OA	- Open Access
ODL	- Open and Distance Learning
OER	- Open Educational Resources
SAQs	- Self-Assessment Questions
SLRD	- Self-Learning Resources Development
SMS	- Short Message Service
TMA s	- Tutor-Marked Assignments
UTME	- The Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination
VLE	- Virtual Learning Environments

Blended Learning:	is accomplished by using multiple teaching and learning strategies, a range of technologies in combination with face-to-face interaction and the deployment of both physical and virtual resources;
Distance Education	is a set of methods or processes for teaching a diverse range of students located at different places and physically separated from the learning institution, their tutors/teachers as well as other students;
Learning	is an active process of construction of knowledge, attitudes, and values as well as developing skills using a variety of resources including people, printed material, electronic media, experiential and work-integrated learning, practical training, reflection, research, etc. Learning is also associated with personal change and empowerment as an aspiration to improve oneself to help others;
Open Distance Learning:	Is a multi-dimensional concept aimed at bridging the time, geographical, economic, social, educational, and communication distance between student and institution, student and academics, student and courseware, and student and peers. Open distance learning focuses on removing barriers to access learning, the flexibility of learning provision, student-centeredness, supporting students, and constructing learning programmes with the expectation that students can succeed;
Student Centeredness	<p>Requires that students are seen as the main foci of the educational process and they are supported to take progressive responsibility for their learning and research. However, the pedagogy employed should:</p> <p>Enable successful learning through rich environments for active learning,</p> <p>Establish links between students' current meanings and contexts and new knowledge to be constructed, and</p> <p>Encourage independent and critical thinking;</p>
Student Support	<p>Is a generic term that is applied to a range of services that are developed by CDL&CE to assist students to meet their learning objectives and to gain the knowledge and skills to be successful in their studies; Student support includes:</p> <p>Tuition support in the form of detailed, individualized, and timely feedback to formative assessment; regional tutorials in a medium (face-to-face, online, telematics, etc.) that is accessible to students; remedial interventions such as responsible open admission programmes to help underprepared students achieve success in order to decrease the distance between student and facilitator;</p> <p>Peer support in the form of institutionally arranged and supported peer self-help groups;</p> <p>In-text support in the form of well-designed well-integrated courseware creating rich environments for active learning with a sensitivity for context, different voices, etc. and promoting dialogue between teacher and student in order to decrease the distance between student and study materials;</p>

Administrative support in the form of timely, accurate, and accessible information from institution to students about all aspects of the learning process, from registration to graduation;

Tutoring in ODL	Encompasses a broad range of teaching, coaching, mentoring, and monitoring activities that guide students through their courses, mediating the packaged learning materials and facilitating the learning process;
Widening Participation	Denotes activities that are aimed at bringing in and supporting groups of people who are identified as underrepresented for higher education. In doing so, it takes into account the diverse needs of people in different sectors of the economy, as well as different racial, gender, and age cohorts who participate in higher education.

Source: *Compiled by the Editor (2016).*

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CHAPTER ONE

BRIEFS ON UNIABUJA ODL

1.1 Background

The University of Abuja was established in January 1988 and academic work began in 1990. Its establishment was informed by the imperative to provide an institution of higher learning within Abuja. The university was established [under University of Abuja Act - No. 106 (1992) cap U2 LFN (2004)] as a dual-mode University with the mandate to run both conventional and distance learning academic programmes following the Ezeilo's Committee Report and enrolled its first set of students in 1992. The Centre is charged with the responsibility to facilitate the development and co-ordinate the delivery of degree and sub-degree programmes by the distance learning mode.

The University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education (CDL&CE) provides traditional distance education in programmes. It has been supported by central services and corporate applications, leading to reasonable consistency in the thrust. A current aim is to ensure that it is sustainable at a high level of quality.

The aim of the Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education (CDL&CE) is to increase access to education to a large number of citizens interested in furthering their education to improve themselves educationally and professionally. Unlike the formal system, however, distance education is designed to democratize and liberalize education

to facilitate the pursuit of knowledge without sacrificing one's career. Thus, it enables studies to be combined with work by those that are interested in improving themselves to advance in their profession and careers. Indeed, one of the objectives of the system is to make life-long education the hallmark of Nigeria's educational policy.

The purpose of the ODL of the Centre is reflected in the revised guidelines of the National Universities Commission (NUC) on open and distance learning in Nigerian universities, which is to create and widen access to education and to utilize distance education techniques and associated communications technologies to meet the particular requirements of the learners. The University has demonstrated its commitment to partnering with other tertiary institutions and international educational bodies like the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) to promote open and distance learning.

The ODL offers flexible learning with interactive content that engages students preparing for their career but have difficulty attending conventional classroom training because they are:

- i. Geographically dispersed with limited time and/or resources to travel;
- ii. Busy with work or family commitments which do not allow them to attend courses on specific dates with a fixed schedule;
- iii. Located in conflict and post-conflict areas and restricted in their mobility because of security reasons;

- iv. Limited from participating in classroom sessions because of cultural and/or religious beliefs; and
- v. Facing difficulties with real-time communication (e.g. very shy learners).

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) students rely heavily on an Asynchronous study environment in which contents are delivered through a self-paced course. In a self-paced study, learners have access to a set of interactive and self-contained materials available anytime, anywhere at the click of a mouse, through e-Learning's application-specific and hands-on virtual labs.

1.2 Vision Statement

The vision of CDL & CE is to be a Centre of excellence in the provision of quality access to and availability of distance learning educational content through innovative technology-based services to enhance teaching and learning.

1.3 Mission Statement

The mission of CDL & CE is to deliver quality education by creating a virtual campus of the University beyond its physical location to meet the changing needs of the learner and society through integrated education, innovative and cost-effective use of applications, and cutting-edge technologies in the delivery of excellent academic and other professional services.

1.4 Philosophy

Our philosophy is to remove barriers and expand educational opportunities to those who for one reason or the other could not acquire education through the conventional university education system.

1.4.1 Guiding Philosophy

The philosophy behind the University of Abuja CDL&CE is guided by the realization that existing conventional universities have challenges of capacity and ODL has been found to be viable alternative.

1.4.2 Overriding Philosophy



Figure 1.1: Overriding Philosophy

1.5 Objectives

The Centre's main objectives are to:

- Provide university education opportunities for those who, for one reason or the other, cannot acquire such education through the regular university education system;
- Provide opportunities for those, who though, have the regular university education, may be interested in acquiring new knowledge and some specialized skills in other areas outside their initial areas of specialization;
- Organize occasional seminars and workshops for people in both private and public sectors to enable them to keep abreast of developments in their various areas; and
- Provide opportunities for life-long education.

1.6 Core Values

Our core values are driven by a desire to improve learning, achieve teaching excellence, and operate with the highest standards of:



Figure 1.2: Core Values

1.7 Accessibility, Flexibility, and Life-Long Learning

Table 1.1: Flexible Delivery Technologies Framework

CDL&CE Distance Education Delivery Technologies	Characteristics of Delivery Technologies				
	Flexibility			Highly Refined Materials	Advanced Interactive Delivery
	Time	Place	Pace		
First Generation —The mail Model • Print	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Second Generation—The Multi-media Model					
• Print	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
• Audiotape	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
• Videotape	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
• Computer-based learning	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
• Interactive video (disk and tape)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Third Generation- The Tele-learning Model					
• Audio-teleconferencing	No	No	No	No	Yes
• Videoconferencing	No	No	No	No	Yes
• Audio-graphic Communication	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
• Broadcast TV/Radio and Audio-teleconferencing	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Fourth Generation—The Flexible Learning Model					
• Interactive multimedia (IMM)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
• Internet-Based access to WWW resources	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
• Computer mediated communication	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

• Computer mediated communication (CMC)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Fifth Generation—The Intelligent Flexible Learning Model					
• Interactive multimedia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
• Internet-based access to WWW resources	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
• CMC, using automated response systems	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
• Campus portal access to institutional processes and resources	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: CDL&CE ICT Unit/Learner Support (2020)

1.7.1 Objectives of Open and Distance Learning

The major objectives of Open and Distance Education in Nigeria is:

- i. To increase access to formal and non-formal education to all desiring learners.
- ii. To be convenient & flexible and cater for the continuous education of the individual.

It is on this premises that the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education's flexibility and lifelong policy is based on the following:

- Fostering access to continuing and lifelong education for all, regardless of differences in gender, age, race, marital status, creed, religion, and socio-economic status.

- Promoting increased access to education provisions to all categories of interested applicants who meet the basic admission requirements.
- Making learning flexible, individualized, and custom-made to meet the needs of the learners.
- Providing blended learning platforms, including occasional face-to-face meeting, e-learning, Learning Management System (LMS), podcasting, tutor-marked assignments (TMAs), online lab simulations, etc. for our learners.
- Allowing learners to complete their programmes within a maximum of ten years for a five-year programme.
- Providing flexible channels for distributing and collecting self-learning resources.

1.7.2 Flexibility and Lifelong Learning

Flexibility and lifelong learning is based on the following overall priority:

- i. Foster access to lifelong education
- ii. Ensure that gender, age, race, marital status, and financial constraints will not be barriers to knowledge/skills acquisition and updating.

- iii. Promote accessibility in the sense that all categories of interested applicants who meet the basic admission requirements shall be allowed to pursue education through open distance learning
- iv. Make learning flexible and customised service to our clients
- v. As a dual-mode University, the Center for Distance Learning and Continuing Education (CDL&CE) will abide by acceptable policies in the areas of minimum admission requirements as prescribed by the National Universities Commission, the highest regulatory body for University education in Nigeria
- vi. The Centre will in the nearest future introduce access programmes that will prepare potential applicants who do not possess minimum admission requirements and thereafter proceed to achieve their educational goals.
- vii. Ensure access to financial assistance from the government, non-governmental agencies, and also through a public-private partnership.
- viii. Encouraging collaboration among comparable institutions in areas of research and visiting scholars in areas that may be beneficial to the Institute.
- ix. Providing blended learning platforms, including occasional face-to-face meetings, e-learning, Learning

Management System (LMS), podcasting, tutor-marked assignments (TMAs), online lab, etc. for our learners.

- x. Providing flexible channels for distributing and collecting

CHAPTER TWO

OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING AND OPEN EDUCATION

2.1 Introduction

Higher education in Nigeria is presently facing a critical challenge to meet new demands in the 21st Century- providing increased educational opportunities to train highly qualified manpower to fuel development and address the challenges confronting the country. With a population of over two million applicants seeking admission into (Federal, State, and Private) universities presently in Nigeria, only a small fraction (less than 30%) of the applicants get places in universities as a result of constraints of space, time and inadequate infrastructure. Thousands of Nigerian youths are therefore denied the right to higher education.

The Nigerian National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004) recognizes the place of open and distance learning as it affirms lifelong education as the basis of the nation's education. The inability of qualified candidates to get a space in the conventional universities in Nigerian, calls for a strengthening of Open and Distance Learning programme to take in more prospective undergraduates.

The policy stipulates that Open and Distance Learning (ODL) provides options to persons who - after completing junior and secondary education- can continue their education at tertiary level; combine work and schooling at the same time, or seek gainful employment and then continue their

education at a later period of their choice with the following goals:

- i. To provide access to quality education as well as equity in educational opportunities to those who otherwise would have been denied
- ii. To meet the special needs of employers by mounting special certificate courses for their employees at their workplace
- iii. To encourage internationalization especially of tertiary education curricula
- iv. To ameliorate the effect of internal and external brain drain in tertiary institutions by utilization experts as teachers regardless of their locations or places of work (N.P.E 2004)

Open and distance learning (ODL) is defined as the delivery of educational courses and programmes which use a wide range of educational and communication technologies including satellite and web-based technologies which incorporate learning management systems (LMS) with synchronous and/or asynchronous modes of communication. This mode of delivery requires special techniques of open and distance course design and grounded instructional techniques to enhance distance learners learning outcomes (DLLO), as well as the special organization and administrative arrangements.

2.2 Open Distance Learning

Open Distance Learning has evolved, from its origins as correspondence to mobile learning. There is no one definition of open and distance learning. Rather, there are many approaches to defining the term. Among the more commonly used terms related to open and distance learning are the following: correspondence education, home study, independent study, external studies, continuing education, distance teaching, self-instruction, adult education, technology-based or mediated education, learner-centered education, open learning, open access, flexible learning, and distributed learning. The Open University's unique style of distance learning is called supported 'Open Learning'. This means that you study on your own, either at home or wherever that suits you – reading, watching, or listening to material supplied, doing activities and assignments with regular support from your tutor.

Open learning means that you will be learning in your own time by reading study material, working on activities, writing assignments. Supported means support from a tutor and other OU staff based at national or regional centres. You'll also get the opportunity to interact with other students through the OU's online conferencing system, tutorials, and informal study groups, and through events and clubs organised by the OU's Student Union. It can simply be defined as "learning facilitated and supported through the use of information and communications technology. It can cover a spectrum of activities from the use of technology to support learning as part of a 'blended' approach (a

combination of traditional and e-Learning approaches), to learning that is delivered entirely online (Commonwealth of Learning, 2013).

2.3 Open Education

Open Education is the simple and powerful idea that the world's knowledge is a public good and that technology in general and the Worldwide Web, in particular, provides an extraordinary opportunity for everyone to share, use, and reuse knowledge. The European Commission announced a new Initiative in September 2013 which helps in Opening-up Education. The Commission acknowledges that openness has the potential to widen access to education and to improve, amongst others, access, cost-efficiency, and quality of teaching and learning". It also addresses the potential of OER and its policy objectives "Increased use of Open Educational Resources (OER), ensuring that educational materials produced with public funding are available to all.

2.4 Open Educational Resources (OERs)

In 2007, Creative Commons launched the Education Projects, where the Open Education and Open Educational Resources became part of the educational policies; with the possibility to license different types of contents, formats under the CC licensing and currently under other types of licenses. The type of licensing is the only thing that distinguishes (or should distinguish) between OER and other types of content. "Teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing

by others. Open educational resources include full courses, course materials, modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge.

2.5 Open Access (OA)

The Open Access to scholarly articles by everyone, free of cost has become also a reality, changing the current business models of major publishers and pushing further to create innovative approaches to this paradigm. “Open Access—the online availability of scholarly information to everyone, free of most licensing and copyright barriers—for the benefit of global knowledge flow, innovation, and socio-economic development.”

CHAPTER THREE

CDL&CE OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING (ODL) POLICY

3.1 Introduction

Right from its establishment in 1988, and through its periodic Strategic Plans since its inception, the University of Abuja CDL&CE has reiterated its commitment to providing an opportunity for all to acquire higher education without distinction of race, ethnicity, creed, sex, and political conviction. Centre of Distance Learning and Continuing Education is determined to provide courses of instruction and other facilities for the pursuit of learning and to make those facilities available on proper terms to such persons as are equipped to benefit from them.

Within the Nigerian University System, the University of Abuja CDL&CE has the longest history of distance learning with structured changes and streamlining from part-time studies in over twenty courses since 1992. At present, CDL&CE is one of the twelve Universities which are regarded as dual-mode universities with the capacity to deliver degree programmes by the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in addition to the conventional face-to-face mode by the National Universities Commission, (NUC).

3.2 Policy Statements

The University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education (hereinafter referred to as “CDL&CE”) is committed to providing quality courses regardless of the delivery format. As such, this policy focuses specifically on

the best practices and strategies for open and distance learning (ODL) and course delivery. Within this context, CDL&CE further endorses the following high-quality standards/guidelines for course design, instruction, associated support services, evaluation and assessment, use and distribution of course materials, the rights and responsibilities of parties, and all related matters associated with open and distance learning.

This policy is additionally designed to assist CDL&CE to conform to the current Federal Government National Policy in Education (NPE, 2004) regarding the accessibility of e-learning materials by overriding obligations specified in the National Universities Commission revised guidelines for open and distance learning in Nigerian Universities. This shall help the CDL&CE in the fulfillment of its educational mission. The 2021 Strategic Plan of the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education dedicates itself to becoming Centre of Excellence in teaching and learning.

The University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education (CDL&CE) must demonstrate that the student who registers in any of its programmes must possess the entry qualifications approved by the University Senate; that it is the same student who participates in and completes course programme and receives the degree qualification by verifying the identity for a student who participates in class, and completes coursework by using methods approved by the institution for data capturing and verification and a secured login, and Pin code and any practice that is effective in

verifying student's identification. Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education (CDL&CE) ensures that its courses and programmes comply with Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard (BMAS) of NUC and Quality Assurance regulations and practices.

3.3 Purpose of the ODL Policy

The purpose of the ODL policy is:

- i. To position CDL&CE as a leading provider of higher education opportunities through curricula renewal, programme delivery.
- ii. To commit CDL&CE to National Universities Commission (NUC) guidelines for true Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programme nationally and globally and in line with the Benchmark and Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS).
- iii. To commit and encourage partnerships/collaborations and interactions with institutions and organizations with relevance to quality ODL programmes anywhere in the world.

3.4 Goals

The CDL&CE ODL policy is aimed at achieving the following:

- Institutionalization of the use of virtual learning platforms for effective teaching and learning in the University of Abuja.
- Help in the adoption and deployment of digital technology for virtual engagement of students in order to improve teaching and learning delivery system in the University.
- Enhancement of ODL activities and capacity building programme across the various stakeholder faculties in the University.

3.5 Objectives

The objectives are to:

- Provide opportunities for life-long education that is interactive and flexible, individualized, and custom-made to meet the needs of the learners.
- Providing blended learning platforms, including face-to-face contact with occasional ODL activities such as online study: Learning Management System (LMS), podcasting, tutor-marked assignments (TMAs), online lab simulations, etc. for learners.

- Affording students the opportunity graduate without unnecessary delays caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and other related problems in line with the NUC ODL framework.

3.6 Underlying Principles

The CDL&CE ODL policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Virtual engagements of students through ODL will help leverage on the use of best learning technologies without compromising academic integrity within the process.
- The virtual engagements of students in the CDL&CE ODL will help in the training and development of employees towards building on their e-learning capacities for effective performance.
- It will help in providing comfort to both staff and students and also reducing the cost of teaching and general learning delivery system in the University.

3.7 Scope

The scope of CDL&CE ODL policy is applicable only to the NUC approved UniAbuja ODL programmes namely; B. Sc. Business Administration, B. Sc. Economics, B. Sc. Political Science, B. Sc. Public Administration and B. Sc. Sociology.

3.8 Funding

The implementation of this ODL policy framework shall be funded by the University management through the budgetary system in line with the federal government's procurement process and general financial system.

3.9 Functions

CDL&CE is a re-organised open distance learning Centre that performs the following functions:

- Offer quality degree programmes as regular courses in terms of course content and quality of degrees awarded.
- Provide flexible work and home support; accommodate the peculiar status of learners who often have to combine work with study.
- Develop curriculum, course materials, and media resources long before prospective learners' are admitted and registered; to enable better pre-registration decision making for them as well as better planning, development, and coordination of programmes by staff.
- Provide quality education affordably and cost-effectively.
- Diversify the body of learners for the purpose of introducing relevant programmes in areas that deal

with social and cultural issues to enhance the quality of life and improve standards of living such as health services, environmental protection, rural and community development, and democratic studies.

- Encourage and support temporarily inactive learners, monitor retention, shorten graduation time and implement the necessary interventions for improvement.
- Register students to study anywhere in Nigeria or any part of the world with a common standard of service at any study centre when put in place.
- Develop capacity-building processes in distance education delivery through staff training and re-training processes.
- Engage in research and development of open distance practices and contribute extensively to national and international debate in this area.

CHAPTER FOUR

GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

4.1 Introduction

The Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education would create synergy among the major stakeholders in the meeting held in 2015 duly constituted by the Vice-Chancellor the following Administrative structure for CDL&CE order to achieve the mission and vision of the University's open and distance learning programmes.

4.2 The CDL&CE Policy Board

The Centre for Open and Distance Learning and Continuing Education is accountable for all programme management and delivery process and also the provision of necessary learner support services. The Centre has a Management Board. The Board includes statutory and non-statutory members. Statutory members are those whose membership of the Board is by their official positions in the University and non-statutory members are those appointed on their merit.

4.3 Organizational Structure

The Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education is structured in line with the governance structures of the University with a clear commitment to quality assurance standards. A distributed support administrative structure is framed by the Centre for the implementation of the University of Abuja Centre for distance learning Programmes. The following describes the functions of each unit in the pursuit of the Centre mission and vision.

4.3.1 Membership and Functions of the CDL&CE Policy Board

4.3.1.1 Membership

The members of CDL&CE Policy Board include the following:

Table 1.2: Composition of Membership of CDL&CE Policy Board

S/N	Designation	Membership
1.	Vice-Chancellor	Chairman
2.	DVC Academic	Member
3.	DVC Administration	Member
4.	Registrar	Secretary
5.	Bursar	Member
6.	University Librarian	Member
7.	Director, CDL&CE	Member
8.	Dean, Management Sciences	Member
9.	Dean, Social Sciences	Member
10.	Dean, Student Affairs	Member
11.	Director, Academic Planning Unit	Member
12.	Director, ITMS	Member

Source: VC's Appointees (2021).

4.3.1.2 Functions of the Management Board

The functions of the CDL&CE Policy Board are to among other things:

- Advise on the administrative policies, future expansion, and direction of development of the Institute.

- Oversee the implementation of University policies, as they affect the Centre other than those relating to its academic programmes.
- Consider the Centre's annual estimates and make appropriate recommendations to the Development Committee through the Vice-Chancellor.
- Advise the Vice-Chancellor on the adequacy of staff and facilities which would enable the Centre to execute its mandate of carrying out distance education programmes.
- Make recommendations on staff conditions of service, staff development, and promotion of administrative staff of the Centre.
- Consider and make recommendations or act on any other matter referred to the Board by the Vice-Chancellor or any other appropriate organ of the University.
- Board must report to and obtain the approval of the Vice-Chancellor on all its activities.

4.3.2 Tenure of the Board

The tenure of each board member so appointed shall be for a period of two years. They may be re-appointed only once for another tenure of two years.

4.3.3 Meetings of the Board

The board shall meet once every quarter. If and when necessary, emergency meetings of the Board can be convened to deliberate on urgent matters.

4.3.4 Quorum

The quorum for any meeting of the Board shall be one-third of the membership of the Board as constituted at any point in time.

4.4 CDL&CE Management Committee (CMC) and Their Functions

The Centre Management Committee is chaired by the Director, of the Centre with membership drawn from Heads of academic and administrative units.

4.4.1 Composition of the CMC

The following are members:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 1. Director of the Centre | - | Chairman |
| 2. Deputy Director, Academic | - | Member |
| 3. Deputy Director, Learner Support- | | Member |
| 4. Deputy Bursar/ Accountant | - | Member |
| 5. Heads of Department | - | Member |
| 6. Deputy Registrar | - | Secretary |

4.4.2 Functions of the CMC

The CMC is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Academic and Administrative matters of the Centre and is responsible to the Management Board of the Centre.

4.4.3 Meetings of the CMC

The CMC Management Committee meets once a week or more frequently as the situation might demand.

4.4.3 The Duties of the Principal Officers in CMC

The following shall be the roles and responsibilities of CDL&CE Officers:

A. Director

- Director is the Chief Executive as well as the Chief Accounting Officer of the Centre.
- Director is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Centre with the assistance of the Centre Secretary and is the coordinator of the activities of the Centre.
- All staff of the Centre, both academic and non-teaching, are answerable to the Director.
- Director must ensure that the line of communication of the Centre is not breached.

B. Deputy Director (Academic)

- Assist the Director on all academic matters.
- Handles the lecture and examination timetables.
- Heads of Department report to the Deputy Director (Academic) on academic matters.

- Processing of question papers for examinations, if Heads of Department have not been appointed.
- Recruitment of invigilators for CDL&CE examinations, ad-hoc and casual staff, for residential programmes.
- Overseeing the CDL&CE Students' Association activities.
- Overseeing and Management of course text writing and production
- Distribution of course text materials, study guides, and study packs.
- Coordination of library activities and study aids
- Coordination of all online lectures
- Casting services.
- Coordination of students' and lecturers' support programme
- Coordination of students' counseling activities.

C. Centre Secretary

- Assisting the Director in the day-to-day running of the Centre.
- Handling of Personnel and Administrative matters of the Centre.
- Secretary to the Academic Board and Management Board of the Centre.
- Handling of ceremonies – Matriculation and Convocation.
- Processing of students' requests – Deferment, Leave of Absence, Studentship Extension, Confirmation, etc.
- Processing of statements of results, keeping of students' records, academic profile/transcripts, verification of certificates, etc.
- Distribution of certificates, students' identity cards, processing NYSC Exemption Letters, etc.
- Screening and registration of new students.
- Arrangement of examination venues.

D. Centre Financial Officer

- In charge of accounting and financial matters of the Centre.
- Reports to the Director on financial matters of the Centre.

4.5 Membership of CDL&CE Academic Board

The membership and functions of the Academic Board of the Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education

4.5.1 Membership

- i. The CDL&CE Academic Board shall consist of the Director, Deputy Director (Academic), Deputy Director (Learner Support), and all Facilitators assigned to the Centre as Centre Governing Board may determine.
- ii. The quorum of the Academic Board shall be one-third (or the whole member nearest to one-third) of the total number of members of the Board. The board may also regulate its procedure.

4.5.2 Functions of the Academic Board

Subject to the provision of the act setting up the University, it shall be the functions of the Academic Board to:

- i. To advise and report to the Governing Board on all matters relating to the organization of teaching and research in subjects of the Centre or other teaching unit, including curricula and examination;

- ii. To consider the progress and conduct of students in the Centre and to report thereon;
- iii. To recommend to the Board/Senate, persons for appointment as examiners; and
- iv. To deal with any academic matters referred to it by the Board/Senate.

Note: All academic activities of the Centre must be processed to Senate for approval.

4.6 Committee System in the Centre

The Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education uses the Committee System for the smooth running of the Centre. The following Committees are in place:

4.6.1 Admissions Committee

Deputy Director (Academic)	-	Chairman
Deputy Registrar	-	Secretary
Heads of Academic Department or Nominees-		Member
Centre Nominee	-	Member

4.6.2 Appointments & Promotions Committee

Director	-	Chairman
Deputy Directors	-	Member
Deputy Registrar	-	Secretary
Centre Nominee	-	Member

4.6.3 Curriculum Review Committee

Director	-	Chairman
Director, Academic Planning	-	Member
Deputy Directors	-	Member
Heads of Department	-	Member
Deputy Registrar	-	Secretary

4.6.4 Examinations Committee

Deputy Director (Academic)	-	Chairman
Deputy Registrar	-	Secretary
All Programme Coordinators	-	Member
Centre Exam Logistic Officers	-	Member
Centre Nominee	-	Member

4.6.5 Finance/Procurement Committee

Director	-	Chairman
Deputy Registrar	-	Secretary
Deputy Directors	-	Member
Centre Deputy Bursar	-	Member
Store Officer	-	Member

4.6.6 Office Allocation Committee

Director's Nominee	-	Chairman
Deputy Directors	-	Member
Deputy Registrar	-	Secretary
Heads of Department/Programme Coordinators	-	Member
Centre Nominee	-	Secretary

4.6.7 Publication Committee

Deputy Director (Academic)	-	Chairman
Deputy Registrar	-	Secretary
Heads of Academic /Programme Coordinators	-	Member
Centre Nominee	-	Member

4.6.8 Research and Development Committee

Director	-	Chairman
Deputy Registrar	-	Secretary
Deputy Director (Academic)	-	Member
Heads of Department	-	Member
Programme Coordinators	-	Member

4.6.9 Sanitation, Beautification, and Landscaping Committee

Centre Head of Maintenance	-	Chairman
Head Gardener	-	Member
Centre Nominee	-	Member
Centre Secretary	-	Secretary

4.6.10 Safety and Security Committee

Director to Constitute the Committee		
Deputy Registrar	-	Secretary
Chief Security Officer	-	Member
CSO Nominees	-	Secretary

4.6.11 Staff Welfare Committee

Director to constitute the Committee	-
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4.6.12 Student's Welfare Committee

Deputy Director (Academic)	-	Chairman
Deputy Registrar	-	Secretary
Heads of Department Nominee	-	Member
Centre Secretary Nominee	-	Member
President, CDL&CE Students Association	-	Member
Welfare Officer, CDL&CE Students Association	-	Member

4.6.13 Examination Time-Table Committee

Deputy Director (Academic)	-	Chairman
Centre Examination Officer	-	Member
Centre Deputy Bursar	-	Member
Centre Secretary's Nominee	-	Secretary
Programme Coordinators of Stakeholder Departments	-	Member

CHAPTER FIVE

ADMISSION POLICY/GUIDELINES

5.1 Introduction

The overall goal of the policy on the admission of the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education is to open up greater access to quality university education for the teeming population of workers, out-of-school youths and adults, and unemployed secondary school graduates, who are hitherto denied access to university education in Nigeria. It is recognized that the Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education has migrated fully to the Open and Distance learning (ODL) mode, there is the need to adopt an appropriate admission policy that is ODL friendly. Therefore, with effect from the 2015/2016 academic year, the following requirements are prescribed for admission to degree programmes in the Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education.

5.2 Students' Characteristics

Knowledge of the students' characteristics is needed to be able to provide useful and relevant support that would make learning easy for those who are in the distance learning programme of the Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education. At the CDL&CE the characteristics of its learners are stated below:

- i. Distance learning students have the same entry qualification as the conventional students as stipulated

in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004) and the National Universities Commission BenchMark.

- ii. ODL students cut across the various age range (i.e. the age of the ODL students is not restricted but diverse.
- iii. ODL students work and learn.
- iv. The Students learn without limits of a university wall, (i.e. there is no physical contact with the lecturers)
- v. They are active-learner and are independent.
- vi. Hands-on, as they are willing to learn and make effective use of the computer.
- vii. Their learning is self-directing and self-motivated.

5.3 General Admission Requirements

Candidates seeking admission into the specified programmes of the Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education need not take the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) or any other Entrance Examination but must meet the minimum existing national requirements for admission into the university as stipulated by the National Universities Commission (NUC) BMAS.

1. Applicants must meet the minimum entry requirements of Five (5) credits in SSCE/WASC, GCE 'O' Level, NECO, NABTEB with Five credit passes including English and Mathematics obtained at not more than two (2) sittings.

2. Applicants awaiting result are NOT eligible to apply.
3. The minimum age requirement is sixteen years.
4. Two 'A' Level passes with a minimum of five 'O' level credit passes in the relevant subjects.
5. OND in a relevant field with a minimum of upper credit obtained from a recognized institution plus five (5) 'O' level credit passes as in (1) above.
6. NCE with a minimum of Ten points pass obtained from a recognized institution in addition to five (5) 'O' level credit passes as in (1) above.
7. Admission is open to all applicants irrespective of any learning disability or challenge.
8. Applicants are required to possess basic ICT skills to enable them navigate the ICT Enabled Supported Blended Learning Model (IESBL) of the ODL mode.

5.4 Method of Application and Admission

The application is done online through the Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education website. Candidates offered provisional admission will be required to:

1. Submit their credentials for revalidation
2. Go through an Applicants Induction Course (AIC) on ODL culture
3. Submit themselves to capturing of their biometrics

5.5 Duration and Mode of Study

Programmes run for four or five years depending on entry qualifications. The mode of study is mainly through online course delivery, multi-media resources, audio-visual materials, (CDs, DVDs, Disk drive), etc.

5.5.1 Admission Requirements to Year 1

Candidates seeking admission to Year 1 should possess one of the following:

1. Five credits in the SSCE/GCE/NECO O' Level, including English Language and Mathematics, and any three other subjects relevant to the cognate area taken in not more than two sittings.
2. Five merits in the NABTEB/TC II in relevant subjects.

5.5.2 Admission Requirements to Year 2

Candidates seeking admission to Year 2 should possess one of the following:

1. The National Certificate of Education (NCE) with at least Merit grades in two relevant teaching subjects.

2. The National Diploma (ND) in relevant fields with upper credit.
3. GCE A' Level with at least credit grades in three relevant subjects.
4. The Higher National Diploma (HND) in relevant fields with a minimum of lower credit.
5. Candidates seeking admission to Years 2 must, in addition, possess the minimum O' Level requirements.

CHAPTER SIX

LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for course development, teaching and learning methods, learning material delivery channels, Effective counseling and guidance, learner supports, etc., at the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education Center. For effective delivery of content, a learner-focused approach, clear outcomes, and accessible use of online and other technologies will be used. The following shall guide the CDL&CE in the implementation of its pedagogical deployment:

6.2 Self Learning Resources Development (SLRD)

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework, principles, and guidance for self-learning resources development at the University of Abuja CDL&CE. The Centre recognizes:

- a) That it's self-learning resources represent a critical interface between the Centre and its learners.
- b) That it's self-learning resources are produced in a manner that ensures educational effectiveness, and ease of use.

- c) The need to schedule and manage the production of self-learning resources in a way that maintains high standards for design and quality production.
- d) It should provide its learners with self-learning resources in different media formats that are consistent in meeting high standards of quality and accuracy.
- e) Its obligation to obtain copyright clearances for all self-learning resources before their delivery
- f) Its obligation is to provide public and consistent information about its self-learning resources.

The Self-Learning Resources are in different media formats namely:

- a) Prints (Course Modules)
- b) Audio (Recorded Radio Lecturers & Voice over modules in rewritable Compact Disc (CD)).
- c) Audio Visual
- d) Studio recorded virtual course facilitation videos
- e) CAMTASIA (Recording)
- f) Learning Management System (LMS)

6.3 Course Materials Development (CMD)

The development, production, delivery, and maintenance of CMD are in line with the Centre's eight-phase process.

Stages of the Module Development	Stage 1 Training of Module Writers
	Stage 2 Plagiarism test
	Stage 3 Content Editing
	Stage 4 Language Editing
	Stage 5 Design and Digitization
	Stage 6 Quality Assurance Approval
	Stage 7 Self Learning Resources Production
	Stage 8 Warehousing and Delivery to Learners

Source: NUC, ODL BMAS (2011)

Figure 1.3: *Stages of Module Development*

The overall management of that process rests primarily with the course coordinator. Others who share responsibility for coordination and implementation of the process include course team members; multimedia instructional designers, editors, and visual designers. Course modules are developed and revised in alignment with CDL&CE's strategic and operational educational plans, using principles of learner-centeredness and respectfulness, clear outcomes, and appropriate and accessible use of online and other technologies.

Table 1.3: Module Descriptions

Module Development Stage	Description
Stage 1 Training of Module Writers	The minimum qualification for course material writers is a Ph.D. in the discipline. Writers are selected based on availability, interest, and competence. Specialized training is organized by facilitators to put course module writers through the requisite ODL format for module writing before engagement.
Stage 2 Plagiarism test	All course modules submitted must be subjected to a plagiarism test. The Institute makes use of 'TruTint' software for the test. The report on the index of similarity generated by 'TruTint' is attached to the manuscript. The requirement of acceptance in the Distance Learning Institute CDL&CE is 19% maximum with a 7word count. Any course modules that passed the 'TruTint' test will then be subjected to content and language editing.
Stage 3 Content Editing	The developed course modules undergo detailed content editing by a specialist (not below Senior Lecturer) in the area to make sure that writers adhered strictly to the approved course outline/synopsis. Also, for quality assurance to ensure that the content covered all assigned areas.
Stage 4 Language Editing	Language editing follows immediately after the content editing. The course module is subjected to language editing by a specialist both in ODL and Language to ensure that the module is interactive, conversational, self-learning, appropriate use of ODL language to mention a few.
Stage 5 Design and Digitization	The Instructional Design unit amongst other responsibilities check all the Self-Learning Modules developed to ensure the: Overall usability of the learner interaction with media and provide leadership in the design and creation of the multimedia components of online and blended courses. The instructional design unit shall create customized content – related graphics to ensure functionality, easy navigation as well as visually appealing.
Stage 6 Quality Assurance Approval	Course materials are subjected to scrutiny by the Quality Assurance Committee to ensure quality in compliance with ODL global best practices. This will ensure that the course materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with guidelines of the NUC BMAS. • Attain the international standard for the technical content of ODL courseware. • Properly acknowledge all sources cited in the courseware • Do not fall below the University maximum standard for plagiarism

- Do not fall below the University maximum standard for plagiarism
- Provide feedback to the course developers for observed anomalies by the Q A committee.

Stage 7 Self Learning Resources Production

All Self-Learning Resources are produced in quality multi -media formats and shall include but not be limited to hard print, electronic format, an online and offline format capable of being stored in various storage devices such as flash device, CD, DVD, etc. for easy access to learners. The electronic copy is uploaded on the CDL&CE LMS.

The final manuscript is sent to the publisher (UNIABUJA) Press for printing. After formatting, the proofs are returned to the module writers for final editing before it is signed out for final printing. Each module thus printed is assigned an ISSN number.

Stage 8 Warehousing and Delivery to Learners

The Self Learning Materials are stored in the store within the Centre premises for subsequent distribution to learners by the staff. The Centre presently has two channels of delivery of learning resources:

- **Through couriers' services:** Currently, the Centre has a valid MoU with DHL Courier Service and NIPOST. Interested learners who indicated interest to receive learning resources via courier by filling an online form will have them delivered at a subsidized rate to their physical address.
- **Physical Collection:** Designated areas are provided by the Centre which is stress-free at no cost attached.

Source: NUC, ODL BMAS (2011).

6.4 Intellectual Property and Copyrights

The Centre requires authors to be original in the writing. The Self Learning Materials developed by a facilitator or group of facilitators become a permanent document of the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education after due payments have been done. Even though a brief on the course writers and other contributors are included in the course materials, the Centre is the copyright owner of the materials and shall obtain copyrights for its entire

materials from the University of Abuja, Intellectual Property Rights Office.

6.5 Programme Development and Approval

Development of new programme is the responsibility of Departments, Faculties/Centres/Institutes and the University Senate. The Department initiates the process; the proposal is to be considered by the Departmental Board after approval, it will be taken to the Faculty Board for consideration and subsequent approval after which it will be submitted to the Senate for approval having referred it to the Committee of Deans, Provost and Directors. This process must be subjected to NUC assessment of human and material resources available for the proposed programme which must be in line with the provision of the NUC Benchmark and Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) and then the final approval granted by NUC for the for take-off of the programme having satisfied all the necessary conditions.

CHAPTER SEVEN

COURSE FACILITATION AND DELIVERY SYSTEM

7.1 Introduction

This section of the policy applies to any course that forms part of an award programme of the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education. The Centre adopted the blended mode of course delivery.

7.2 Delivery Methods

Advanced teaching and learning models, well designed courseware, effective/efficient administration and timeous student support using a wide range of delivery channels are core to the success of University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education students. CDL&CE will consider choosing appropriate methods and principles to support these core functions which include:

- a) Methods shall encourage learners' active participation.
- b) The mode of delivery shall build on the learners' experience and knowledge which would enable them to construct new knowledge and experience.
- c) The chosen method(s) shall be student-centered.
- d) Where learning outcomes can only be achieved through work-based experience, work-integrated learning should be used (practical oriented courses).
- e) OER utilization shall be encouraged.

- f) Library use shall be encouraged.
- g) Course facilitators and E-tutors assigned to each course will work collaboratively to ensure that learning is delivered effectively.

7.2.1 Courseware

Print media remains the practical choice since it is inexpensive, reliable and accepted as a medium for studying purposes.

- Courseware shall be well designed to facilitate access to information.
- Courseware material should prepare the student for learning, develop the necessary skills, attitudes and knowledge that the student needs, guide the student through the learning process and include sufficient and appropriate learning activities to enhance knowledge.
- University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning Continuing Education will invest in good quality course design and study material and will provide effective in-text student support services.

7.2.2 Learning Technologies Infrastructure

A reliable, scalable and secure technology infrastructure is crucial to the support of online courses. The use of Internet technologies to deliver a broad range of solutions that enhance knowledge and performance will be used to facilitate the process of teaching and learning. CDL&CE will use a

combination of virtual classrooms combined with audio/video and texting facilities with interactive assessments to deploy its advanced synchronous delivery.

- Other resources such as digital media (audio and video CDs, DVDs), satellite broadcasting, online distribution of content and information via CDL&CE Learning Management System and corporate websites, audio and video podcasting and streaming, and possibly radio and television will also be used to facilitate the process of teaching and learning.
- Some of the technologies that are asynchronous such as wikis, blogs, social networking facilities and e-portfolios can be used effectively to support teaching and learning

7.2.3 Multimedia with interactive possibilities

- Diverse and current technologies that will serve CDL&CE's educational mission and be sustainable will be included in the delivery of courseware.
- Technologies such as telephony, multimedia CDs and DVDs, video and audio conferencing, SMSs and MMSs via cell phones, e-mail and discussion forums/chat facilities via CDLCE platforms offer new possibilities for supporting innovative learning in distance education and must be integrated from the design phase of courseware. These various options are used to

facilitate interaction in support of the courseware. Highly interactive multi-party engagement can use:

- well-equipped facilities for face-to-face contact sessions, and
- many of the above technologies in combination with rich media and multi-directional, multi-user, collaborative toolsets in a distributed web-based environment.
- University of Abuja CDL&CE uses advanced synchronous technologies which range from web based document and application sharing, online whiteboards combined with audio/video and texting facilities, interactive assessment, to simulations and virtual reality. Most of the latter functionalities are already available in the CDL&CE Platform. The appropriate use of technology is essential to the survival of the institution as a global role player. Technology makes it possible for employees, students and other stakeholders to interact with University of Abuja CDL&CE anytime and from anywhere in the world. Therefore, it forms an essential part of the skills base of our students who have to compete in a knowledge-driven globalized society.
- The multimedia approach with interactivity between students and lecturer(s), students and tutors, students and students, and students and institution is much

more effective than a single medium. Criteria for the selection of media include:

- a) Access and availability
- b) Pedagogical appropriateness
- c) Integration of the media into a coherent experience.

7.3 Course Delivery Structure CDL&CE

The course delivery structure in CDL&CE shall undergo the following processes which are stated below:

7.3.1 Programme Coordinators are appointed.

The Programme Coordinators from all the participating departments shall responsible as follows:

- Must be lecturer II and above;
- Appointed by the Head of Department;
- Provide clear materials to familiarize the course facilitator with the course content, the methodological approach and course deadlines;
- Invest time to train course facilitators technically for using the Learning Management System prior to the start of the course;
- Share the burden of providing technical support to students with the online facilitator;
- Remind students, if and when needed, that the course facilitator can be expected to have a regular online

presence but will not be constantly monitoring online activities;

- Set reasonable and realistic timeframes for the online facilitator to complete tasks such as grading assignments.
- Coordinates the programme for his/her department;
- Responsible to the Director of the CDL&CE.;
- Carry out duties on behalf of the course development team through the monitoring of day-to-day course development.
- Liaise with writers, instructional designers, editors, and also verifies the accuracy of illustrations and ensure that course development deadlines are met;
- He/She shall coordinate the activities of the ODL in his/her department.

The following shall also be noted by the Programme Coordinators on Course Delivery Process:

- Course facilitators are appointed for the online learning courses.
- If this course is also delivered on campus then the same person should coordinate all forms of delivery. Where

the Course Coordinator is not the same person there should be close liaison.

- Any course offered online, distance education or blended learning shall be approved by the Senate.
- A Course Checklist must be used as a compliance guide by Course Coordinators during the Course development, delivery, evaluation and completion.
- A Course Outline shall be developed for every course online, distance education or blended learning.
- Course Coordinators shall submit a statement to the Director (before each teaching period) verifying that the Course Outline satisfies the University Course Outline Policy.
- Course Materials for modules/study sessions should be developed by or in consultation with academic staff.
- If materials including modules/study sessions course outline etc. are to be sent in paper copy to students then this must occur one week prior to the delivery time.
- The Course Coordinator shall provide for those students with print disabilities who request a Course Outline in an appropriate format and timeframe.

- Course Coordinators are required to include in their materials (either in written materials or electronically) some information on the communication/interaction mechanisms to be used in the courses. There are a variety of forms that can be used including discussion boards, forums, chat rooms, e-mail or phone.
- The learning outcomes (including graduate attributes) of any online, blended learning or distance education course must be the same as any on campus equivalent.
- An online presence for each course shall be established which includes contact details of the Course Coordinator with e-mail address, a course outline, links to online resources and support services, and appropriate University policies. If an electronic teaching environment is used then the website must have a link to the teaching environment where information can be placed. All websites must be developed within a standard format.
- The Centre provides interactive lectures for students on its learning management system (LMS).

7.3.2 Course Facilitators

The following shall be the primary tasks of an Online Facilitator at the CDL&CE

Pre-course:

- i.) Shall become familiar with the technological aspects of the course environment in the Learning Management System;
- ii.) Review the course content and tasks involved, including taking note of deadlines for both learners and the facilitator.

Start of the course:

- i.) Shall be familiar with online content and ease students into the online environment with Icebreaker activities and/or initiating a round of introductions among the students;
- ii.) Set ground rules for online interaction, including tips on netiquette, etc.

During the course:

- i.) Shall foster learning among students through open discourse and experience-sharing;
- ii.) Respond to forum postings regularly, and summarize postings in each discussion forum in a concise manner to provide a sense of the key elements surrounding a topic (bringing out both commonalities and differences in student views);
- iii.) Provide clarifications on course content, and refer participants to additional resources in the subject area when needed;

- iv.) Mediate as necessary to initiate discussions, or resolve disagreements, and to keep students on track in relation to course objectives;
- v.) Provide timely feedback on assessments whether these activities are graded or not;
- vi.) Remind students of deadlines at required intervals; Support students, especially those less familiar with technology, in their use of online communication methods when they face difficulties;
- vii.) Pay attention to students' lack of engagement and follow-up with those who don't regularly participate to minimize the dropout rate.

After the course:

- i.) Shall provide requested feedback to course coordinator for course evaluation purposes;
- ii.) Remain accessible for clarifications required on any-course related issue like grading.

CHAPTER EIGHT

POLICY ON LEARNER SUPPORT SYSTEMS AND PROGRESSION

8.1 Introduction

Learner support is an important and integral component of open and distance education. Thus, the University of Abuja CDL&CE places great importance on its wide range of support services and resources that are provided to help learners succeed in their studies and to manage other areas of life that may affect their academic performance. The learner-support system in the University of Abuja CDL&CE is commensurate in quality as in the conventional face to face mode. However, Learner-support services shall manage potential risks from challenges and complexities in the administration of Distance Learning programmes. The support offers effective ways of overcoming barriers to effective teaching delivery and provides learning materials in a flexible and readily accessible manner alongside peer support and academic mentoring. The various learner support services provided by the Centre are grouped as follows:

8.2 Pre-Enrollment Support

- Innovative support and advice to prospective learners relating to entry requirements, and programme choices.
- Career counseling, guidance, information and advice to help prospective learners make informed decisions.

8.3 Supports during the Programme

The CDL&CE assists learners in acquiring the necessary skills that will enable them benefit from the online learning platforms. These include:

- Basic ICT skills needed to navigate online learning platforms
- Training on how to navigate and optimally utilize the Moodle LMS for their learning.
- Adopting effective study skills and habits that would enable them achieve success in their study.
- Encourage learners to develop personal skills and qualities necessary for success in their academic pursuit.
- Develop effective time management skills.
- Timely referrals as at when required
- Continuous support on assessment monitoring and submission within stipulated time/period.
- Career counseling, guidance, information and advice to help learners plan for the future.
- Opportunity for feedback on CDL&CE operations including quality of support, course materials course delivery etc.

UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA
CENTRE FOR DISTANCE LEARNING AND
CONTINUING EDUCATION (CDL&CE)

Learner Support Framework

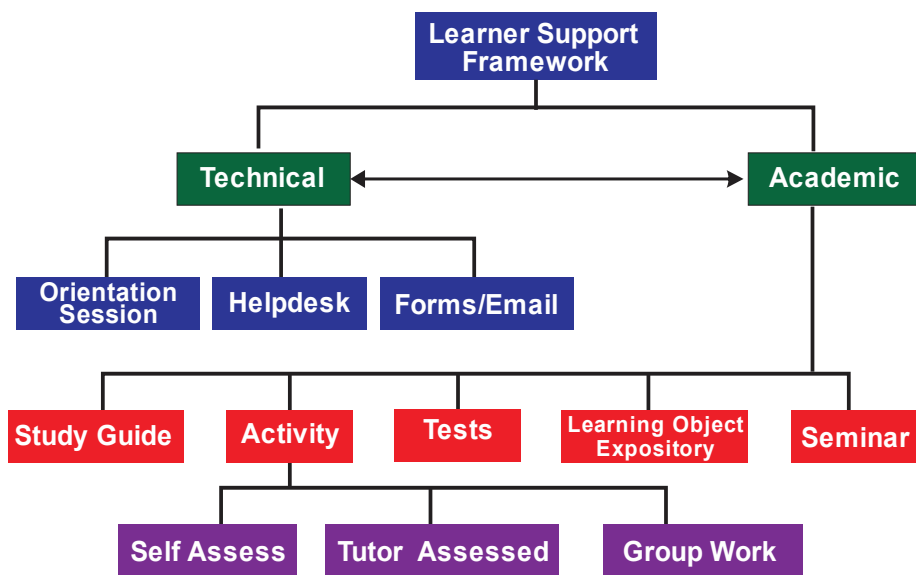


Figure 1.4: Learner Support Framework

8.4 Helpdesk Support

- The University of Abuja CDL&CE provides well trained and motivated Help Desk Officers located within its office as well as on-line to provide support and render robust assistance to the needs of learners when it arises especially those relating to pre-admission, admission, registration and course delivery.

- It provides both on-line and physical helpdesk services for complaint management, problem resolution and information access on matters relating to learning platforms, LMS, Email systems and other E-services provided by the University of Abuja CDL&CE desk office.
- The Helpdesk shall provide linkage opportunities to facilitators, e-tutors, different departments and units and among learners and staff.

8.5 Students' Support

Student Support:

- Takes into consideration the diverse needs of students as well as the level of study, is a critical factor for teaching, learning and research in open distance learning,
- Encompasses tuition, peer, in-text and administrative support and the orientation to work-integrated learning. Tuition support includes detailed, formative and timely feedback on students' assignments via the decentralised distribution of assignments as well as opportunities to engage in argument and debate with their peers and tutors through a variety of accessible and appropriate media, such as face-to-face, telematics and online. The regions will play a crucial role in providing facilities for tuition and peer support as well as access to library materials.

- Includes mechanisms designed to bridge the gap between student's learning experience from high school and the demands of higher education, or between undergraduate and postgraduate studies,
- Enhances communication between the student and the lecturer(s), student and peers, student and courseware, student and administrative support and student and institution.

8.6 E-Tutors/Support Staff

The tutor will be central to both student support and assessment:

- Provides constant support for students and ensures that assistance is available if and when required;
- Keeps records of attendance, enquiries, assignment marking and all correspondences with students and the institution;
- Going through the Interactive Learning Resources (ILR) and extracting learning activities for students in collaboration with course facilitators;
- Supports in transferring course contents to mixed-media format alongside the course facilitators;

- Support the Course Facilitators in setting up of Assignment, Grading & Communication with students;
- Set and coordinate Chat sessions on LMS and other VLE (Virtual Learning Environments) for students in collaboration with the facilitators;
- Extracts discussion topics from the hard-copy course materials for students and post Essays, Discussions, etc to students;
- Supports students on various social media communication links available and carting queries for response or submission to solution desk(s).
- Serving as support staff for any complaints from students;
- Gives feedback to the facilitators, counselors and institution preferably through written report, highlighting any problems that you or students encountered and suggesting possible adjustments.

8.7 Support Provided after Programme Completion

- Graduates are supported to identify other possible learning opportunities and the ways in which these opportunities could be accessed.
- Graduates request for documents (transcript, Statements of result, Studentship status etc.) and

employer's requests for confidential reports are attended to promptly.

8.8 Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Measurement Support

The Learner Support is subjected to close monitoring by the Head/Coordinator of the Learner Support unit and subjected to annual review by the Academic Board. This policy shall be amended periodically to accommodate new ideas. Annual monitoring of the effectiveness of the support system against retention and achievement data for learners who receive additional learning support is used as an impact measurement tool. Impact is measured by the number of learners who access the various support services available to them and the number of staff who attend development sessions on learner support. Systems shall be developed and used to monitor and measure the retention and success of learners who received additional learning support.

8.9 Tracer Study / Graduate Survey

The study is a retrospective analysis of graduates through a survey. This is undertaken by the CDL&CE after the learners' graduation between six months and three years of graduation. The information gathered assists the Centre to evaluate the medium to long term impact of their programmes and learning resources. (The study is aimed at improving programmes strategies, training contents for staff, study conditions, transition of graduates from education to the labour market for better matching the supply skills with the demand for them). The questions are channeled towards

study progress, transition to work, work entrance, career, use of learned competencies on current occupation. The feedback from the survey is an important way of improving study conditions and contents and also a powerful tool to be used for policymaking.

8.10 Academic Calendar

The Centre is regulated by the University. The Calendar of the Centre is approved by the Board. All activities such as application for admission, release of admission outcomes, orientation, applicant induction course, resumption of studies, meetings, residential programme and examinations are scheduled well in advance and adhered to strictly. The calendar of events is released at the beginning of each academic session, with specified duration for each activity.

CHAPTER NINE

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) POLICY

9.1 Introduction

The undertaking of the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education (CDL&CE) is to provide an enabling environment for teaching and research. The Centre is therefore committed to dynamic knowledge generation, leadership in innovation and a culture of excellence. It is on this premise that CDL&CE has embraced the concept of Open Educational Resources and its use in higher education in line with contemporary practice in global education the is committed to participating in a scholarly community characterized by world leading teaching, research and best practices across a range of disciplines.

9.2 Definition of OER

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching, learning and research resources available for free access and use with no or limited restrictions and adapted for teaching, learning, development and research. CDL&CE envisages that the use of other OERs will become fully incorporated into teaching and learning at all levels within the institute to further ensure that the highest standards of education are achieved. To ensure smooth take off of the OERs at CDL&CE, the UniAbuja ITMS has been strengthened with both human resources and equipment. The university ICT infrastructure is supported by fibre optic backbone and internet bandwidth of 50Mbps to facilitate improved and efficient access throughout the university campus. OER are available in digital formats

(online and offline formats such as DVD or CD-ROM). The IT network will be continuously upgraded to support the OER website that would share selected materials on the World Wide Web. OER are also available in printed form.

9.3 Types of OER Materials

The term OER will be used to refer to learning materials such as:

Learning objects (quizzes, crossword puzzles, flashcards, animations, interactive maps, timeliness, etc.)

- Audio Lectures
- Audiovisual Lectures
- Images
- Sounds and Music
- Collections of journal articles and institutional repositories
- Textbooks

9.4 Benefits and Functions of OERS

The potentials of Open Educational Resources (OERs) include:

- Expanding Access To Learning
- Ease of Distribution
- Augmentation of Class Materials

- Enhancement of Regular Course Content
- Quick Circulation
- Less Cost To Students and Institution
- Continually Improved Resources

Considering the immense benefits of Open Educational Resources, the Centre shall use and adopt available OERs to supplement course materials. They shall be used to:

- Broaden the scope of alternatives to textbooks, while maintaining quality
- Foster pedagogical innovation and relevance
- Reduce the alluring lethargy of teaching from textbooks
- Lower cost of course materials for students and institution.
- Promote easy and free access to academic content
- Facilitate collaboration with other institutions in developing expertise in OER.

9.5 Purpose of Policy

The policy outlines the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education (CDL&CE) position on Open Educational Resources (OERs) and provides guidelines and operational framework for its use. The University encourages staff and learners to use, create, and publish OERs to enhance the quality of the learners' experience, enhance the provision of learning opportunities for all, and improve teaching practices. It also recognizes that use, creation, and publication of OERs are consistent with the University of Abuja reputation, values, and mission to “make a significant, sustainable and socially responsible contribution to Nigeria and the world.

9.6 Policy Statement

All materials released on the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education (CDL&CE) site shall covered under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license (CC BY-SA). This license allows you to freely modify, rework and extend any of the material, and later distribute it under the following two conditions:

- You must provide attribution to the creator of the materials, and
- You must license your derivative version under the same license (CC BY-SA)

9.7 Regulation on the Use of OER

The Centre keeps in mind the copyrights Act for digital online Higher education in Nigeria. University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education (CDL&CE) operates Open license under Creative Common (CC) that grants permission to access, reuse, remix or redistribute with or without restriction except with some materials that have non-derivative clause are not open.

9.8 University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education (CDL&CE) Tools to Identify and Select OER

Several resources are available on the Internet that provides teachers and learners with tools to identify and select OER for use in instruction. Some of these are:

- African Virtual Library OER portal, <http://oer.avu.org>, developed by 12 African Universities.
- Textbooks uploaded on the social network Scribd: <http://www.scribd.com/>
- OER Commons; MERLOT; Connexions; Internet Archive; FREE: Federal Resources for Educational Excellence; COL Knowledge Finder; Creative Commons; Open DOAR; Curriki; Hippocampus; Edu 2.0 etc.

9.9 Criteria for Selection of OER

University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education (CDL&CE) Criteria/Guidance for Selection of OER Materials are listed below

- Quality of content, literary merit and format
- Timeliness
- Favourable reviews
- Permanence/lasting value
- Authority: author
- Scope and depth
- Physical quality
- Formats available: print, DVD, flash Drive, Tablet format and Android, CD-ROM, online, etc.
- Reading level
- Accessibility

9.10 Scope Mandatory Policy

This policy applies to all learners and staff of the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education (CDL&CE). It is overseen by the Intellectual Proprietary Right Quality Unit of the University of Abuja.

9.11 Types of Licenses

University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education (CDL&CE) shall adopt the Creative Commons (CC) license scheme as its basis for sharing OER as it addresses various copyright issues and sharing options that have been identified. Creative Commons is a not-for-profit organization that develops, supports, and stewards legal and technical infrastructure that maximize digital creativity, sharing, and innovation. Creative Commons allow authors, scientists, artist 66+ and educators to easily mark their creative work with the freedoms they want it to carry, so others can share, remix, and use commercially, or any combination thereof.

9.12 Review

The OER Policy shall be reviewed periodically as part of the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education (CDL&CE) review of policy compliance or in response to changes in the legislative or regulatory requirements.

CHAPTER TEN

POLICY ON LEARNERS' EVALUATION, EXAMINATION, AND GENERAL ASSESSMENT

10.1 Introduction

Assessment is the process through which learners are evaluated to determine their level of success and the category of grade to be awarded. It is also an objective way by which learners are measured to determine whether they have satisfied the examiners for the award of degree/certificate. In other words, assessment is a way of determining learning outcomes of learners with the aim of providing feedback. The assessment strategy of the UniAbuja CDL&CE:

- Will ensure that students develop effective cognitive, reflective, self-management and practical skills,
- Will include formative assessment which is designed to support the teaching and learning processes or support research skills,
- Will include formative and summative assessment aspects that will be used for making a judgment about the achievement of the learning outcomes,
- Will assist students and tutors to monitor their learning in relation to formative assessment tasks and feedback

10.2 Scope of Assessment

The policy is applicable to all programmes of courses and subjects offered by the UniAbuja CDL&CE.

10.3 Principles of Assessment

The fundamental aims of assessment are to guide learners' development through ensuring high quality of output regulated by quality assurance and delivery in all courses offered by the UniAbuja CDL&CE. Based on these; the following principles guides CDL&CE assessment:

- Assessment is aligned to specific learning outcomes and specific skills expected of learners.
- Assessment is designed and structured to provide an objective evaluation of knowledge, theoretical, practical and analytical skills acquired by learners.
- It is a transparent process, administered with high level of honesty, integrity and confidentiality.
- Question databanks are created for all courses out of which expert in the field shall select for specific session assessments.
- Assessment ensures reliable and consistent judgement of learners' performance.
- Each course unit is graded in accordance with University grading procedure.
- Students' participation in online learning interactions either chat, forum, assignments, quizzes etc. are to be

assessed and graded as deemed necessary by the Facilitators under the School's Academic Department/Unit

- Computer-Based-Assessments done on LMS are to be graded by the Facilitators at their discretions.
- Facilitators through e-Tutors pre-set learning activities (Chat, Forum, Assignment, Blog etc.) making room for maximum learning exercise.

10.4 Grading Policy/Procedure

Table 1.4: CDL&CE Grading Policy/Procedure

S/N	Score	Grade	Grade Point
1	70% and above	A	5
2	60% - 69%	B	4
3	50% - 59%	C	3
4	45% - 49%	D	2
5	40% - 44%	E	1
6	0 – 39%	F	0

Source: NUC (2011).

10.5 Assessment Forms

- i. Assessment is both formative and summative in nature.
- ii. Formative evaluates current skills of learners while summative evaluates the extent of new skills acquired by learners through effective individual task, group task, multiple choice types, essay type and other means of developing learners' skills and competencies.
- iii. Assessment is all inclusive to ensure that all areas of skills expected of learners are covered and tested.

10.6 Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA)

- Continuous assessment is minimum of two and maximum of four; Tutor Marked Assessments (TMA). The weight attached should range between 5 and 10 marks.
- Total tutor marked assignment ranges between 30%-40% of the total mark obtainable while the final assessment ranges between 60%- 70% of the total mark obtainable.
- The turnaround timer for assessed work by the tutor is a maximum of three weeks from the due time.
- All TMA scores are submitted two weeks before the commencement of the final assessment.

10.7 Computer Marked Assessment (CMA)

The CMA follows the same procedure with TMA as highlighted above. However, this shall be used strictly for large classes or as deemed fit by the facilitators & E-tutors of the course.

10.8 Assessment of Learning Resources by Learners

The end users of all our learning resources are learners. The Centre allows learners to evaluate/assess the effectiveness and shortcomings of all resources through self-constructed questionnaire. The feedback from learners' evaluation/assessments is used to further improve on learning resources for the next session. Major observations are effected immediately while minor ones are effected during the five year review of learning resources.

10.9 Regulation for Assessment

- All formative assessments for the session are made available online through the Learning Management System (LMS).
- Details of the formative tasks expected, as well as the opening and closing due dates for each formative assessment are specified, while possible date for the summative assessment are put online.
- The only acceptable identification of learners on the assessment documents (scripts, etc.) is the unique matriculation number.

- Instructions are part of assessment, failure to follow instructions are sanctioned.
- Learners are required to be at the venue of assessment not later than half an hour before the commencement of any assessment.
- It is mandatory for learner to visit the LMS at least three (3) times a week.

10.10 Academic Misconduct

A. Examination

The examination rules of the University of Abuja shall be applicable for the conduct of all examination at CDL&CE.

B. Examination Rules

Students of CDL&CE must observe the following rules:

1. Must be at the examination venue 10 minutes before their examination is due to begin
2. Must sit at the desks with numbers corresponding to those on their examination cards and must not move these desks.
3. Are required to sign the attendance slip on their desk.

4. May be admitted to the examination room up to 30 minutes after the start of examination but shall not be allowed extra time.
5. May be allowed to leave examination room after the first 60 minutes but not before the last 15 minutes of the examination. However, such a candidate shall not be readmitted unless through the period of his or her absence he or she has been continually under supervision of an invigilator or an examination attendant.
6. Are required to bring their examination card to each examination and display it on their desk for verification.
7. Shall not communicate with any other candidate or make any noise or cause disturbance during an examination.
8. May attract the attention of the invigilator by raising their hands. Absolute silence must be maintained in the examination hall.
9. Must not directly or indirectly assist any other candidate or permit him to copy from or use his or her papers.
10. Must not directly or indirectly accept any document or any unauthorized object into the examination room.

11. Shall not take any book, paper, document or any unauthorized object into the examination room.
12. Shall write their examination number at the top of the cover of every answer book and every separate sheet of paper, under no circumstance should they write their names.
13. Must do all rough work in their answer books or in any supplementary answer sheets and cross out neatly. Use of scrap paper is prohibited.
14. Shall not remove from the examination room or mutilate any paper or other materials supplied.
15. Shall stop writing when instructed to do so.
16. Mobile phone is not allowed in the examination hall.

Any student that violates any of the above rules is deemed to have committed an examination misconduct/malpractice and shall be punished in line with the senate approved penalties.

C. Revised Guidelines and Disciplinary Measures on Examination Misconduct

All students are strongly advised against indulging in any of the under listed acts (1-25) as violators will be sanctioned accordingly:

Table 1.5: Revised Guidelines on Examination Misconduct

S/N	Misconduct	Disciplinary Measure
1.	Refusal to be identified and/or searched at the entrance of the examination hall and or refusal to display examination slip on the desk	Barring the students from examination for that paper by the chief invigilator and course treated as carry over
2.	Leaving examination hall without permission	Self-expulsion from the examination hall duly reported and sanctioned by the chief invigilator and the paper treated as carry over
3.	Rudeness to invigilator during any examination characterized by verbal abuse, insolence, unsavoury comments, disobedience etc.	Rustication for one semester
4.	Threat and/or physical violence on invigilator or any University staff during the examination or in the context of examination matters	Expulsion from the University
5.	Disruption of examination characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Assault ii. Violent Behavior iii. Threat to Life 	Expulsion from the University
6.	Disturbance during examination characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Speaking to other candidate(s) while the examination is going on ii. Frequent unauthorized movement iii. Noise Making etc. 	Warning in the first instance and expulsion from the examination hall by the Chief Invigilator on subsequent infraction and the course treated as carry over.
7.	Being in possession of dangerous weapon(s) in and around the examination hall	Expulsion from the University
8.	Lateness to examination hall; a student may be admitted into the examination hall 30 minutes into the examination	Shall not be allowed extra time
9.	Exchanging information written on question paper, four figure table, etc.	Rustication for one(1) academic session
10.	Possession and/or use of unauthorized electronic devices that can compromise the integrity of examinations, including but not limited to GSM phones, MP3 players, programmable calculators, palm tops, wrist watches, etc.	Expulsion from the University

11.	Possession of unauthorized materials	Rustication from the university for one
12.	Unauthorized possession and/or use of answer booklets, continuation sheets and other examination materials by means of stealing, smuggling, buying, printing and substitution of answer booklet, etc.	Expulsion from the University
13.	Possession and/or concealing cheat materials in or writing on any part of the body and/or clothes	Expulsion from the University
14.	Attempting to destroy exhibit(s) after apprehension by chewing, tearing and defacing of the exhibit(s) or resisting apprehension (including running away) with the exhibit(s)	Expulsion from the University
15.	Possession of an already written answer booklet in the examination hall	Expulsion from the University
16.	Swapping of examination booklet(s)	Expulsion from the University
17.	Refusal to submit answer booklet at the end of the examination	Expulsion from the University
18.	Aiding and abetting cheating characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Giving false information such as name, registration number, course ii. Giving false evidence to the Examination Misconduct Committee iii. Acting as a courier of materials that can compromise the integrity of the examination 	Rustication for one semester
19.	Involvement in examination leakage	Expulsion from the University
20.	Intimidating/harassing staff for purpose of leaking examination questions	Expulsion from the University

21.	Impersonation (both the impersonator and collaborator)	Expulsion from the University
22.	Failure to appear before the Committee on Examination Misconduct after (3) invitations	Expulsion from the University
23.	Intentional alteration of examination slip, Identity Card number and photograph	Expulsion from the University
24.	Writing University examination in an unauthorized venue(s) within or outside the University premises	Expulsion from the University
25.	Refusal to write statement of regulation infraction	Expulsion from the University

Source: *UniAbuja Senate (2012).*

- Examination Misconduct Committee is a standing committee of the University established to try any form of examination/assessment misconduct with appropriate sanctions.

Note:

Wild, potentially dangerous and degrading celebration within the university campuses that is threatening the dignity, security and safety of students e.g. throwing/pouring of liquid or substance including sachet water on any student in the name of celebrating completion of examination is an act of misconduct in the University and will attract Rustication for one Academic session and in the case of final year students withholding the result for one Academic year.

10.11 Moderation and Review

- Summative assessment questions and marking guide are reviewed by external examiners from comparable institutions before administering to the learners.

- Graded scripts are also subjected to review and moderation by external examiners.

10.12 Results and Feedback

- i.) Results of all assignment, tests, and examinations are made available to the learners within the shortest possible time.
- ii.) At the end sessional examinations all results are processed to the Senate of the University for Approval.
- iii.) Results are made available to learners after Senate approval.
- iv.) The system ensures that during registration, compulsory carry-over courses are registered before new courses.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE (IAG)

11.1 Introduction

The University of Abuja, Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education aims at providing high quality information advice and guidance service which will enable staff, students, and enquirers to make informed choices about ways in which the Centre can meet their individual study and development needs. In the delivery of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) we support categories of learners with diverse backgrounds that may often face with lots of challenges but not limited to educational background, socio-economic background, different occupational and family challenges, and different personal challenges.

11.2 Aim of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

The aim of IAG unit in University of Abuja, Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education include; providing accessible, personalized, up-to-date, effective, timely, usable and impartial information, advice and guidance on the programmes, facilities and services available at the Centre to current and prospective learners and other interested individuals.

11.3 Objectives of IAG

The objectives of IAG in University of Abuja, Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education include:

- To provide accessible, up-to-date and usable information to learners, potential learners and others who may require such information.
- Help learners manage isolation that is typical of open distance learners.
- Assist learners in adopting effective study skills and habits that would enable them achieve success in their study.
- Provide interpersonal counseling devoid of coercion and subjective biases.
- Treat all learners who come for IAG services individually on the basis of their needs and challenges.
- Guide learners in making informed decisions concerning their studies and academic pursuit.

11.4 IAG Services

11.4.1 Information Service

It covers:

- Dissemination of up-to-date information on the programmes available in the Centre.
- Provision of information on services and facilities in the Centre.

- Use of printed materials such as hand-bill, posters, bill boards, and through electronic media including social media, Centre's Website and Learning Management Systems (LMS) and
- Access to the help desk staff, which are strategically positioned to attend to anybody that needs information.

11.4.2 Advice

This is equal with confidential counseling and help that is provided to prospective learners and current learners as the need arises. This shall be provided through face-to-face, telephone, email, and other personalized methods to the learners. The areas covered under advice include but not limited to:

- Career problems and progression,
- Educational matters and personal issues.
- Advocacy and referral may sometimes be used by IAG staff in helping learners find solutions and achieve success in their endeavor.

11.4.3 Guidance

Guidance is aimed at supporting prospective learners and learners in making informed choices that would help them in achieving their goals of studying at the Centre.

Guidance also aims at:

- Increasing retention rates
- Success and achievements rates.
- Reduction of attrition rate among learners
- Guidance services are provided on person-to-person, individual basis or in group.
- On-line counseling services are also available through the CDL&CE website and LMS for learners who may not be able to access face to face counseling.

11.4.4 Implementation

- Availability of professionally trained counselors in the Centre who are poised to provide impartial and individualized services to prospective learners.
- Availability of well trained and motivated Help Desk Officers to provide support for learners and potential learners as well as those who have graduated but still need one form of information or the other from the Centre.

CHAPTER TWELVE

POLICY ON CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

12.1 Introduction

There exists a Curriculum Review Committee saddled with the responsibility of designing and reviewing programmes in conformity with ODL policy and NUC BMAS. The mandate of this policy is to ensure that all University CDL&CE curricula advance the academic project by taking into account the multiple purposes of higher education as well as achieving its vision and mission. In pursuing these aims, curricula at all levels need to shape critical, capable, knowledgeable, skilled graduates who are able to contribute to the social and economic advancement of Nigeria, Africa, and beyond.

12.2 Objectives of the Committee

- To design and review CDL&CE academic programmes
- To ensure proper programme implementation by facilitators.
- To ensure that learning resources are utilized to complement teaching and learning.
- To propose new programmes.
-

12.3 Principles Governing this Policy

CDL&CE strives to carry out the following, as far as is reasonably practicable:

- Design of curricula at all levels that are responsive to the discipline / field, to the students' learning needs, and to the social context, taking into account our position as a University of National Unity in Nigeria. Curricula should be relevant, up-to-date, and demonstrate awareness of influences on the disciplinary canon and teaching and assessment approaches in all the disciplines.
- Design curricula in which all elements are aligned at macro, and micro levels.
- Develop learning outcomes, which include knowledge and understanding of a discipline/field as well as cognitive, general and professional practices and skills for each course or programme. These shall be in line with the NUC BMAS.
- Consult with key stakeholders in the curriculum design and review process. Stakeholders shall include current and past academics and professional bodies and, where appropriate, employers in both the private and public sector.
- Reviewing processes shall be part of a curriculum plan in order to accommodate new ideas and knowledge in disciplines/fields. Such changes shall also be informed

by the legitimate learning needs of particular cohorts of students and take into account the affordances of digital technologies for enhancing learning and teaching.

- Equity and redress are issues that need to be accommodated in the curriculum. This shall be designed in such a way that it meets the educational needs of all the students admitted to the University of Abuja CDL&CE.
- Diversity of the student body and academics calls for curricula which are sensitive to the different backgrounds and outlooks of those engaged in the teaching and learning processes.
- Course materials are reviewed within a period of five years or whenever necessary.

12.4 Directives for Implementing this Policy

University of Abuja CDL&CE shall take the following actions and processes by which the objectives of the policy will be achieved.

1. Directive 1: In all curriculum design processes the principles described above shall be considered.
2. Directive 2: In the development of curricula departments / faculties shall clearly formulate their purposes as well as learning outcomes. This will facilitate the identification of specific outcomes for

various courses and modules. Such planned outcomes need to be explicitly communicated to students in course/module guides and should appear in the University of Abuja CDL&CE calendar and other relevant documents.

3. Directive 3: Regular critical review of curricula shall be standard practice in every department. Given the rapid pace of change, it is suggested that curricula shall be reviewed every five years and at intervals a more comprehensive overhaul be undertaken.
4. Directive 4: Student and peer feedback data shall be elicited regularly to feed into curriculum review decisions.
5. Directive 5: In developing and reviewing curricula wide consultation shall take place with key stakeholders and academics. Interdisciplinary curriculum planning shall be encouraged.
6. Directive 6: In planning curricula, departments shall accommodate the diverse educational, linguistic and backgrounds of students.
7. Directive 7: Heads of Departments / Course coordinators will be required to report via the Teaching and Learning Committee to the CDL&CE Academic Board on a regular basis in respect of their development and review of curricula.

12.5 Roles and Responsibilities

Table 1.6: Roles and Academic Responsibilities of Staff

Role	Responsibility
ROLE 1 Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design curricula for modules/courses in accordance with the principles in this policy. • Regular evaluation and review of curricula (using feedback data) shall be undertaken.
ROLE 2 Course Coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate curriculum design and review processes in departments. • Work in collaboration with teams of academics to design and review modules, courses and programmes.
ROLE 3 Heads of Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer leadership to academic staff in relation to disciplinary curriculum decisions and processes. • Ensure that course coordinators and academics are designing and reviewing curricula in line with the policy principles and directives. • Initiate five yearly comprehensive review of curricula in departments.
ROLE 4 Deans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer high level leadership and facilitate deliberations on issues affecting curriculum decisions and processes in their faculty. • Establish quality assurance processes across departments (at programme level) in their faculty to ensure that the policy principles and directives are met.
ROLE 5 DD: Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a range of academic staff development courses and programmes with a focus on curriculum design and review processes. • Offer consultations with individual academics or departments on curriculum issues. • Collaborate with academics and/or departments on curriculum research projects. • Offer high-level strategic leadership on matters pertaining to teaching and learning, taking into account the national context and developments within it as well as a broad understanding of the institutional context and particularly the challenges within it.

Source: NUC, BMAS (2011).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING/ HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

13.1 Introduction

The Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education (CDL&CE) recognizes that staffs are fundamental to its success. The CDL&CE therefore needs to be able to attract and retain staff of the highest calibre and adopting a strategic, professional approach to recruitment is essential. The purpose of this policy is to provide a sound framework for the recruitment and selection of staff based upon the principles outlined in the University of Abuja Appointment and Promotion Guidelines. The CDL&CE continually ensures that:

- Her teaching staff has the opportunity for an academically acceptable career development and path for all categories.
- Opportunity is given for continuous development of skills, knowledge, and trainings of teaching staff.
- Programmes are developed to facilitate retention for all categories of teaching staff.
- Staff members are exposed to collaboration with other allied institutions both locally and internationally.

13.2 Category Identification (Scope)

This policy and procedure cover all activities that form part of the recruitment and selection process of the University of

Abuja. It is applicable to all various teaching staff of Centre can be categorized into Full-time, Part-time/ adjunct faculty and non-faculty members. The staff recruitment policy and career progression of the Centre is in line with the following:

- Identification of the staff requirement by the respective departments/units
- Making Budgetary provision of the staff requirement in the University Budget;
- Advertisement of the existing vacancies;
- Short listing of candidates that are found suitable for interview;
- Conducting interview for the shortlisted candidates;
- Identification of those found suitable for appointment; and
- Appointment of those found appointable

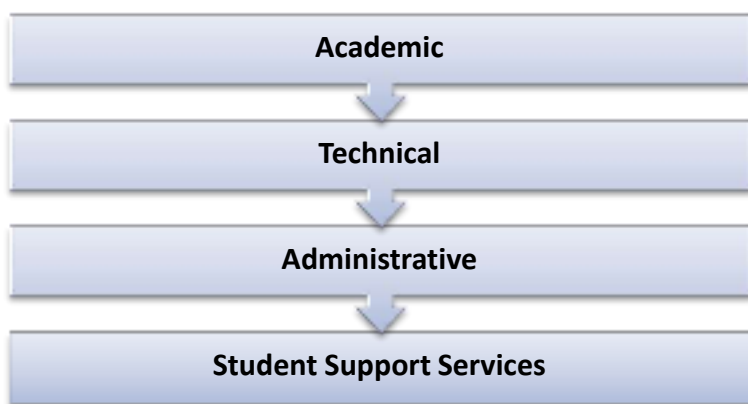
The career progression of staff of the Centre is as contained in the University Appointment and Promotion Guidelines. Currently, the guidelines for appointment and promotion for Senior Administrative and Professional staff of the University is under review by a Committee set up by the University Management to accommodate new cadres of E-Tutors, Help Desk Officers and Counselors. Upon recruitment, staff undergoes training and re-training programmes on the delivery mode and operation of Open and Distance Learning (ODL). The capacity building commences with the facilitators, e-tutors, help desk officers, and counselors as well as other staff of the Centre to update them on the operation of real ODL principles in line with best practices.

13.3 Staffing

To enable CDL&CE plan its Open and Distance Learning programme and deploy quality service, the CDL&CE will employ sufficient academic, administrative and professional staff as its core staff that will be permanent and dedicated to ODL business model and systems. This will enable them to perform optimally and provide continuous, consistent and quality service to the students.

13.3.1 Projected CDL&CE Staffing Structure

The CDL&CE staff is categorized into four:



Source: NUC, BMAS (2011).

Figure 1.5: Staffing Structure

a) Academic

Academic staff shall be responsible for content development and research services. Based on standard global best practices and in line with the University's blended learning goal,

existing academic staff in relevant Departments within the University will serve as resource persons in the development of instructional learning materials for distance learners at the CDL&CE.

Full-Time Lecturers/Facilitators

- Are given the opportunity to move up the hierarchical organogram based on approved institutional criteria.
- Have the opportunity to attend relevant academic and career trainings, seminar and workshops locally every year and internationally once in three years as funds permit to enhance their career opportunities.

Part-Time/Adjunct Facilitators

- Part-Time/Adjunct staff is given the opportunity to attend relevant academic and career trainings, seminar and workshops locally and internationally, that will enhance their understanding of ODL and enhance delivery of their courses.

b) Technical

Technical staff of the CDL&CE will include:

- i. ICT experts-(system analyst, programmer, system administrator, system engineer, web manager, etc.),
- ii. Graphic designers,
- iii. Cameramen and Editors – photographs and video,
- iv. Electronics and electrical technicians

c) Administrative

The Administrative staff of the CDL&CE will include:

- i. Administrative Secretary,
- ii. Accounting Officers,
- iii. Secretarial Assistants,
- iv. Clerk, Etc.

d) Students' Support Services

The Students' Support Services is to include counselors, distribution personnel, marketing and promotion. Outreach services, students' counseling services, and distribution shall be the responsibility of the Network Development and Support Unit, and Resource Centre.

13.3.2 Conditions of Service

The conditions of service of staff are as contained in the University of Abuja condition of service governing senior and junior staff.

13.3.3 Training and Development of Staff

This policy underscores the need for, and commitment to, continuous training and re-training of management, academic and administrative staff of the Centre. In pursuance of this policy, the Centre:

- Ensures appropriate funding of staff training and development programmes
- Encourages and supports Assistant Lecturers to acquire their Ph.D. degree.
- Undertakes on regular basis an assessment of the training needs of all categories of staff and develop appropriate programmes to meet the needs.
- Encourages inter-disciplinary research in Open Distance Learning in which younger lecturers will have the opportunity of learning from their older counterpart.
- Organizes appropriate training programmes for management staff and Board of CDL&CE.
- Encourages mentoring of junior staff by their senior counterpart.
- Encourages members of the Management Board, Management Staff, Academic and Administrative Staff to attend seminars, workshops, and conferences.

13.4 Research and Development

As the CDL&CE fully operate ODL, it recognizes research as an important component of teaching and learning activities. CD&CE through the CDL&CE/Research Committee provides leadership in research and support academic and scholarly studies in:

- Emergent and contemporary trends in ODL
- The challenges and obstacles to quality course materials development.
- Delivery, pedagogical and instructional effectiveness.
- Programmes evaluation, learning assessment and students' achievements.
- Formulating Open Education Resources (OER), theoretical explanations and impact on ODL activities.
- Assessment of Quality Assurance theory and practice
- Evaluating student perception of ODL activities.

Through research, Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education will constantly review teaching and student support services in order to protect the integrity of its degrees.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

14.1 Introduction

The University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education in accordance with its 5 years Strategic Plan Goal 4 detailed the development of adequate learning infrastructure for its academic programmes and activities.

14.2 Building Infrastructure

The process of building Phase II complex is in progress. The building when completed will provide lecture rooms, laboratories, office space etc. required to support its programmes.

14.3 E-Resource Center and ICT Facilities

The University's management support for the provision of full complement of digital tools to enhance ODL delivery has been quite sublime. These include:

- Provision of a fully equipped Recording Studio
- A video-conferencing room with enhanced technology to host webinars.
- Provision of upgraded Operating System for the 500 capacity CBT E-resource room. There is a medium-term strategic plan to increase the CBT rooms to 1000 capacity.

- Provision of new upgraded Host Servers, Inverters and Batteries.
- Increase in the University of Abuja bandwidth and provision of Wi-Fi hotspots in designated areas.

14.4 Extension of Entrepreneurial Skills

The University of Abuja has a World Class Entrepreneurship Centre responsible for training students in various entrepreneurial skills in accordance with NUC policy. The aim of the programme is to enable graduates of the University to acquire skills to enhance their employability or become employers of labour themselves. For our CDL&CE learners, appropriate pedagogy will be adopted to extend practical skills acquisition, where necessary via simulations and other methods convenient for distance learners.

14.5 Library/E-Library

The CDL&CE Library has the capacity to seat over 50 students with space to scale it up to 150 when the need arises. The University of Abuja operates an Integrated Library System that enables CDL&CE learner's access all the E-library resources in the Main Library. The e-book databases cover all subject areas and meets both onsite and offsite users' information needs. In addition to the databases efforts are always made to procure print books in all the programmes being offered.

14.6 Storage Facilities

The Centre boasts of a large capacity warehouse for storage of learning resources and other operational materials. Printed modules, DVDs etc. are delivered for storage and distribution to learners. CDL&CE has a contractual MoA with DHL and NIPOST to dispatch course materials especially printed modules to learners who require such services.

14.7 Transportation

There is adequate maintenance of all the official cars and project vehicles in the fleet owned by the Centre. Budgetary allocations are made to procure additional vehicles when the need arises.

14.8 Healthcare Facilities Services

The University of Abuja has a well-equipped Medical Centre within the Main Campus to provide both primary and secondary health services to staff and students. On registration, learners are enrolled in the Tertiary Social Health Insurance Programme (TSHIP) which qualifies them to access medical services at the Medical Centre. In addition, during the Saturday Study Centre meeting and the residential programme health personnel and an ambulance is stationed within the CDL&CE premises to provide First Aid to students and staff in case of emergency before such cases are referred to the Medical Centre for evaluation and treatment.

14.9 Security and Safety Measures

The CDL&CE is well secured with physical fencing and four fortified access gates. For additional security the premises are covered with a CCTV. There are security personnel posted for surveillance at all times.

14.10 Municipal Services

- The Centre for Distance Learning & Continuing Education has two Generators – 250 KVA electric generators to provide alternative power in case of outage by PHCN.
- There is a water borehole in the premises. Two 5000 litre plastic tank help in distribution of water to all the buildings in the premises.

14.11 Maintenance of Facilities

These are regular maintenance and upgrading of the Centre infrastructure. Soft and hardwares shall regularly be updated as the need arises. Overhauling of infrastructure shall be done every session before learners resume back for both online and face to face interactions.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY MEASURES

15.1 Introduction

The CDL&CE Quality Assurance policy is determined by the relevance of learning materials and adequacy of services provided for students to achieve desired standard performance as contained in its Mission and Vision statement. Quality assurance is embedded in the assessment process as the continuous existence of the Centre is in its ability to operate within internationally best practices. In order to maintain high level of quality among learners, the following are put in place:

- a) Ensure quality study materials which must have passed through a three stage editing: content, language and ODL instructional design process.
- b) Well specified learning outcomes for each study session, in-text questions (ITQs) and end of study session Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs) designed to ensure learners intermittently evaluate their learning progression.

15.2 Quality Assurance Mechanisms

The following quality mechanisms are deployed:

- **Quality Assurance:** These proactive processes are deployed during the academic session for improving the quality of course content delivery.
- **Quality Control:** Intensive control measures are implemented to ensure that required standards for ODL for online and face to face facilitations are achieved.
- **Quality Improvement:** This process is deployed for the enhancement of infrastructure especially ICT infrastructure.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** The Centre provides feedback to the learners through the appropriate feedback channels.

15.3 Sustainability of Programmes

To sustain the programmes run by the Centre, the Centre embarks on aggressive marketing of programmes in prints, social media, advocacy, TV and Radio adverts throughout the six geopolitical zones of the country to create maximum visibility of programmes and showcase importance of ODL. This is done in line with the laws and approval by the Senate of the University of Abuja. New programmes are continually being developed according to the needs of the society. This is done with strict compliance to the University regulations and

National University Commission (NUC) Minimum Academic Standards.

15.4 Learning Resources

Learning resources are reviewed at every 5 years of its production. Additional resources are added periodically. OER are updated regularly while additional resources are added.

15.5 Human Resources

There is staff capacity development as detailed in chapter fourteen of this document

15.6 Learners' and Alumni Associations

The Centre supports Distance Learning Students Associations activities aimed at the general well-being of learners (religious, welfare, and sports, social). CDL&CE Alumni Association is aligned with the main body of the University of Abuja Alumni Association.

15.7 SERVICOM Unit

The unit ensures that complaints from learners and staff are attended to timely and effectively. It also ensures that learners get value and good service delivery. Other activities include:

- You have a right to be served right.
- Say NO to poor service delivery
- Ask Servicom

Note that all complaints/Enquiries should include Matriculation Number, Department, Full name is optional.

15.8 Policy Implementation

The implementation strategy is as outlined below:

Implementation Plan

Specific procedures of implementation, monitoring, evaluation and (internal and external) review are compiled and reviewed every five years or before every accreditation.

- i. An ODL management committee monitors, evaluate and review the implementation procedures
- ii. An ODL training plan indicates the short, medium- and long-term goals of staff development of CDL&CE employees in the delivery of ODL.
- iii. Research in ODL influences essential and continuous process to ensure best practices in ODL.
- iv. Appropriate, efficient and effective systems and structures are consolidated around the teaching and learning process.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

16.1 Introduction

Collaboration and Partnership is one of the core values of the University of Abuja Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education (CDL&CE) and a pillar in helping the Centre to realize its goals in promoting access at reasonable or low costs and high quality. We do this with governments, relevant agencies, universities, colleges and other educational and training establishments at both national and international levels.

16.2 Purpose

The Centre for Distance Learning and Continuing Education shall collaborate in terms of materials sharing and development, sharing of experiences, exchange of programmes, research, capacity building, etc. The Centre shall also be extending its wings into the whole areas for collaboration in order to improve on ODL programmes of the CDL&CE, Promote cooperative endeavours, create and widen access to education, improve its quality of teaching and learning, utilization of distance learning techniques and associated communications technologies to meet the particular requirements of our Centre, and to strengthen our human resources required for their advancement. Whatever levels that collaboration partner, CDL&CE shall place premium on the following for successful collaboration:

Clear goals and clear statement of purpose

- Significant roles of the collaboration and partnership for administrative and academic purposes
- Governance and funding structure that fits the purpose
- Commitment of resources from all our partners.

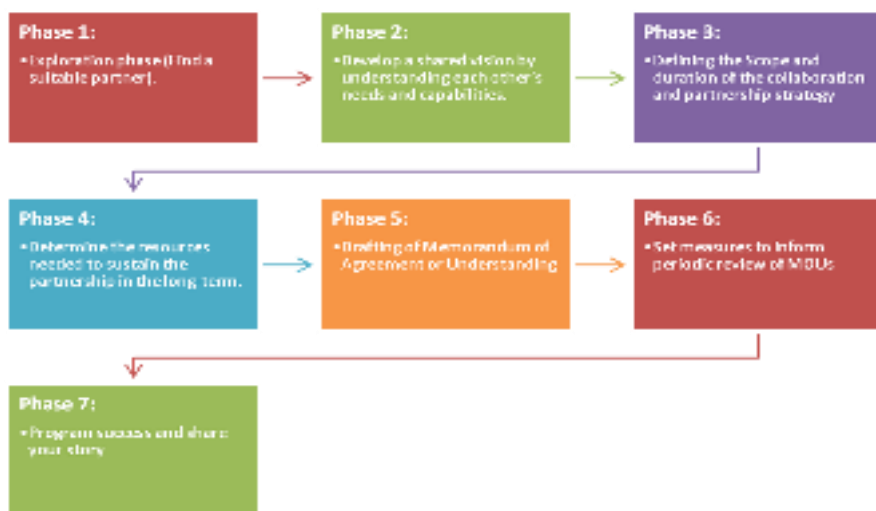
16.3 Academic Collaborations

- CDL&CE collaborates with distance education institutions in other Countries in Africa, and internationally to make opportunities available for employees and students.
- Collaboration is an important strategy for renewal and development in ODL.
- Academic collaborations are a common strategy for capacity building in the following areas:
 - i. Student support strategies in ODL
 - ii. Academic strategies in ODL
 - iii. Other aspects of ODL such as the development of courseware and the use of multimedia
 - iv. The integration of technology to support teaching, learning and assessment at a distance

- v. The integration of technology to support communication at a distance
- vi. The training and development of university employees
- vii. Joint development of formal or non-formal courses or instructional material or the licensing of material
- viii. Sharing experience on common policy issues
- ix. The sourcing of tutors for face-to-face or e-tutoring

16.4 Process of Collaboration and Partnership

The CDL&CE collaborative linkages and partnerships involve seven phases as indicated in Figure 1.6.



Source: CDL&CE Management (2021).

Figure 1.6: Phases of CDL&CE Collaborative Linkages and Partnerships

17. Conclusion

In conclusion, the members of UniAbuja CDL&CE Policy Board want to reiterate that this ODL policy is a strategic document for growth that is all encompassing in providing policy direction for e-learning activities in the University of Abuja which should be pursued vigorously by all and sundry towards effective implementation of all the policy issues designed towards achieving the goals of the various programmes with strict compliance with National Universities Commission's (NUC's) Benchmark and Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) for running of such programmes in Nigeria which is tailored towards improvement of the educational standard for national development.

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