



THE
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
OF JAMAICA

"Assuring Quality in Higher Education"

16th Annual Quality Assurance in Higher Education Week

Standards for Distance Education

Quality Assurance Requirements
for Curriculum Design, Learner Engagement
& Support

-Miss Sandra Bloomfield



THE
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
OF JAMAICA

"Assuring Quality in Higher Education"

Brief Overview

MAKING THE SHIFT FROM STUDENT ENGAGEMENT TO
EMPOWERMENT



Focus of Standards

Academic Programmes, Curricula and Supporting Materials

- An established set of courses, and related documentation that defines each programme.
 - Should be accompanied by clear processes and procedures for programme and curricula development and approval

LEARNER SERVICES AND SUPPORT

- The provision of educational, administrative, and support services to ensure that learners are fully informed about the guidelines, rules and regulations governing programmes of study and are therefore able to make informed decisions, from the time of application to the point of completion of study.

Academic Programmes, Curricula and Materials



Programmes must be aligned with institution Mission and Goals - when modified to adopt to an online learning environment or newly developed



Programme adjustments, designs, and development plans must be done in collaboration with the relevant officers and must be clearly communicated to all stakeholders



Additionally, all programmes have a clearly defined learning outcomes that befits the online learning environment and reflects the use of the technology.

Academic Programmes, Curricula and Materials

Standard curriculum outlines should reflect online operations – engagement strategies, learning resources, assessments activities should be documented and maintained for the online environment

Additionally, programmes/ curricula documentations should include with arrangements for teaching support, academic review and assessment plans.

External examiners feedback must reflect online operation. So examiners will observe the Learning Management System, accessible library resources, the online delivery and assessments as a whole.

Academic Programmes, Curricula and Materials

The Learning Management system should be user friendly and easy to navigate. The contents should be organized, suitably arranged and easily accessible.

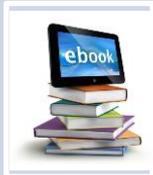
Minimum technology needs, and required technology skills should be communicated beforehand.

Availability of various online technical support, when needed, via A.I. live chat support, short how-to videos, or online technical staff.

Academic Programmes, Curricula and Materials



Training must be provided for faculty to be efficient in the online space. Curriculum support must be provided to assist faculty to redesign programmes, instructional materials, and learning activities for independent learning and collaborative skills that online demands. .



Course materials, information packaged on the LMS must be accessible to all students – plan the content access with students challenges in mind, such as, bandwidth issues, varying devices.

Course material must include self monitoring activities

Learner Services and Support



Communicate the institution policies for admission, tuition, and the nature of educational services to prospective and registered students via the online space.



Be mindful of ethical standards of practice in the online delivery and communicate to all stakeholders - copyright, plagiarism, netiquette policies.



The rights and responsibilities of learners must be clearly outlined and communicated by the institution.

Students should have a clear starting point.

Learner Services and Support



The institution must implement strong mechanisms and strategies for clear and frequent communication, and interaction among learners and staff administrators, and support personnel.



Special services, and support plans should meet the students' needs - financial information, procedures for managing fees, for accessing financial and other similar support.



University students are stressed, - these are adult learners, who have other responsibilities competing for their time and attention – be mindful of this when materials are being packaged for delivery and assessments. Try to sequence tasks so that the stress is not compounded. Allow for some flexibility.

Learner Services and Support



Appropriate training and support should be provided to all learners to interact with the online technology.



Clearly communicate plans and provisions for special needs students to operate in the online space.



The institution should have procedures in place to accurately and securely maintain learners' records, with access available only to approved individuals.

Learner Services and Support



The institution should have learner services that are commensurate with the learner population to adequately support learners as they pursue their programmes of study.



Library websites, should be provided with subscription to bibliographic databases and online journals.



Coordinate Communications

Communications should be consistent wherever they are located.

Communications should be clear and accurate.

Communicate through a Calendar – that has information for the full semester/year.

Institution should take a silo approach to communications - have a central communication channel for students.



THE
UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
OF JAMAICA

"Assuring Quality in Higher Education"

Promote a Data Driven Culture - Facilitate Evaluations



Encourage students to provide feedback on the learning experience – the virtual learning environment, the faculty, the learning resources and support services.



Facilitate feedback from faculty on the support services, their issues with the virtual learning environment, the curriculum and any areas they believe needs improvement.



Gather feedback from online support staff – what areas stakeholders find most challenging – what mitigation plan do you propose?

Integrate external examiners feedback in improvement plans..

Thank you!

