

Flexible and E-Learning Strategy 2018-2020

1.0 Introduction

The following Flexible and E-Learning Strategy is guided by the Learning and Teaching and Training Policy 2018-2020 for FNU.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to provide directions for the provision of high quality and enriching flexible learning experiences across all modes of delivery.

3.0 Scope

This strategy applies to staff and students at FNU engaged in learning and teaching and training. It focuses on the following areas:

- Strategy 1: Quality assurance
- Strategy 2: Learning experience
- Strategy 3: Teacher development
- Strategy 4: Learning environment

4.0 Guiding principles

The following principles underpin this Flexible and E-Learning strategy:

- i. Appropriate quality assurance procedures must be put in place to ensure the quality of courses/ programmes in flexible learning.
- ii. Appropriate support must be put in place for students on courses/ programmes in flexible learning.
- iii. The strategies for teaching, the provision of learning materials, the systems for student support and the methods of assessment are explicitly designed to ensure that the aims and intended learning outcomes of the course/ programme can be achieved by students who are studying by flexible learning.
- iv. Each course/ programme is delivered in such a way as to provide students, who have been accepted for a course/ programme, with the learning opportunities to successfully complete the award. It should include strategies for promoting autonomous learning and enabling students to take personal control of their own development. Students must be given the opportunity to engage productively with other students for the purposes of collaborative learning.
- v. Flexible learning is evolving. Student centred learning methodologies, new pedagogies and technology enhanced learning needs to be driven by quality research and robust and reliable institutional data.
- vi. The available resources are sufficient to ensure that the course/ programme can be delivered effectively in flexible learning.

5.0 Strategies

Strategy 1: Quality assurance

Quality underpins the (re)design, delivery and evaluation of learning experiences in flexible learning.

- 1.1 Academic committees are to ensure that courses/ programmes offered in flexible learning are continuously monitored and reviewed.
- 1.2 The (re)design, development and evaluation of learning experiences in flexible learning are assessed against relevant quality rubrics to ensure fitness for (re)delivery.
- 1.3 The provision of and adherence to templates to ensure good practice in programme/ course design and delivery for FEL.

Strategy 2: Learning experience

The learning experience in flexible learning should be appropriately developed and supported through courses/ programmes.

- 2.1 Students should receive a clear and realistic explanation of the expectations placed upon them for study of the course/ programme or elements of study, this should include explanation of any IT requirements.
- 2.2 Staff are expected to provide students with the following:
 - a. A schedule for any learner support available to them through timetabled activities, e.g. tutorial sessions or web-based conferences.
 - b. Clear and up-to-date information about the learning support available to them locally or remotely for their course/ programme of study.
 - c. Expectations for both learner and teacher in terms of learning management system engagement, e.g. synchronous and asynchronous communication.
 - d. Documents that set out their own responsibilities as learners, and the commitments of the University and College for the support of a course/ programme of study.

An identified contact, either local or remote through email, telephone, fax or post who can give them constructive feedback on academic performance and authoritative guidance on their academic progression.
 - e. Where appropriate, regular opportunities for discussions with other students taking the same course/ programme to facilitate collaborative learning and to provide a basis for facilitating their participation in the quality assurance of the course/ programme.
 - f. Appropriate opportunities to give formal feedback on their experience of the flexible learning activity and the course/ programme.

Support for learners, whether delivered by FNU staff or by staff of a support provider, or through web-based or other distribution channels, meets the expectations of the University for the quality of learner support for a course/ programme of study leading to one of its awards.

Strategy 3: Teacher development

Staff engaged in flexible learning should be equipped to provide enriching learning experiences through courses/ programmes.

- 3.1 Staff are to be trained in the (re)design, delivery and evaluation of courses/ programmes in flexible learning, e.g.
 - i. Developing a blueprint/ storyboard for a Blended or Online course.
 - ii. Writing achievable learning outcomes.

- iii. Ensuring constructive alignment.
 - iv. Developing a model unit.
 - v. Evaluating appropriateness of technology tools.
 - vi. Effective engagement in learning management systems, i.e. E-moderation.
 - vii. Evaluating the quality of course design and delivery.
 - viii. Developing Open Educational Practices/ Resources (OEP/ OER).
- 3.2 Staff are to be provided appropriate pedagogical support for flexible learning.
- 3.3 Collaborative research in flexible learning.

Strategy 4: Learning environment

Technology enhanced learning environments must be appropriate and adequate in order to effectively deliver and support flexible learning.

- 4.1 Guidelines for proper use of technology enabled learning systems are provided.
- 4.2 Technology enabled learning systems are continuously monitored and reviewed.
- 4.3 Flexible learning provision will take into account the lowest level of technology available to students and that minimum specifications/ requirements are stated in order to properly support courses/ programmes.
- 4.4 Students should be made aware of the IT requirements before enrolling in a course/ programme.
- 4.5 Students should be provided with the means of developing the skills needed to participate effectively in the FEL environment.

6.0 Definitions

The following definitions, informed by practice and literature in higher education will be used for the purpose of this strategy and related flexible learning activities at FNU.

- Flexible Learning – The provision of learning in a flexible manner, built around the geographical, social and time constraints of individual learners, rather than those of the institution.
- E-Learning – All computer and Internet-based activities that support learning and teaching.
- Modes of delivery – Method of delivering instruction from lecturer to student. At FNU, there are three (3) modes. They are Face to face (F), Blended (B) and Online (O).
- Face to face – Mode of delivery where course content is delivered in a classroom based setting in writing or orally with little to no use of technology. [0-29% online engagement]

- Blended – Mode of delivery where course content is delivered online and face-to-face. A substantial proportion of the content is delivered online, typically uses online discussions and assessment methods with some face to face teaching. [30-79% online engagement]
- Online – Mode of delivery where most or all of the course content is delivered online using a learning management system and conferencing tools. Typically will have no face-to-face teaching. [80+% of online engagement]

Strategy tracking	
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