(Approved by Board of Management at its142nd Meeting held on 31.05.2021 vide Resolution No. BM. 142.15.2)

Guidelines for Online Programmes/Courses

(To become an Addendum to "Standards for Achieving Excellence in Development and Delivery of Academic Programmes" notified by the University)

I. General

1. The University Grants Commission (UGC) vide its letter, dated August 9, 2019 granted exemption to the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) from application of ODLRegulations 2017.

2. In view of the above exemption, IGNOU notified vide Notification, dated, Sept. 6, 2019 the 'Standards for Achieving Excellence in Development and Delivery of Academic Programmes' to be followed in all its operations including programme development and delivery.

3. The UGC further issued a Commission Order dated March 17, 2020 exempting IGNOU from application of UGC (Online Courses or Programmes) Regulations 2018.

4. UGC through its Gazette notification issued University Grants Commission (Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020 on September 4, 2020 in supersession of the University Grants Commission (Open and Distance Learning) Regulations, 2017 and University Grants Commission (Online Courses or Programmes) Regulations, 2018.

5. The UGC subsequently issued notification vide F. No. 1-19/2020 (DEB-I) dated March 25, 2021 exempting the University from applicability of University Grants Commission (Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020.

6. The following guidelines in respect of Online Programmes/ Courses will be followed by the University over and above those given in the Notification referred to in Point I (2) and further modified as per Point 1 (4) and (5) above.

II. Eligibility of Programmes for being offered in Online Mode

1. IGNOU shall offer Certificate, Diploma, PG Diploma, Degree and master's degree Programmes in Online mode provided all such Programmes are duly approved by its statutory authorities and the Programmes are eligible as per the following criteria:

   i. The programme needs to be on offer by the University in ODL mode with at least one batch having passed out.

   Exemptions of this clause may be considered on case-to-case basis if there are societal need-based Programmes/Courses to be developed on urgent basis with requests coming from different Ministries of Government of India or State Governments.

   ii. Programmes having laboratory based practical component other than the ones with programming, coding and software tools are not eligible for Online mode.

   iii. Programmes in the disciplines of Engineering, Medical, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and other Para-Medical disciplines, Pharmacy, Nursing, Dental, Architecture, Law, Agriculture, Horticulture, Hotel Management, Catering Technology, Culinary Sciences, Aircraft Maintenance, Visual Arts and Sports which are not permitted to be offered by the concerned statutory/regulatory bodies in Online mode will not be offered.

   Provided that, if the concerned statutory or regulatory body or council permits any of

the prohibited Programmes, as mentioned above, under its domain, at the UG or PG levels in Online mode, the same may be considered for being offered by the University in Online mode after due approval of its statutory bodies and under intimation to the Distance Education Bureau (DEB), UGC.

Provided further that, in case a Regulatory authority/council permits prohibited disciplines at Certificate and/or Diploma level, then the University may offer such Programmes with the approval of its statutory authorities.

2. The Schools of Studies shall be the academic homes of the Online Programmes/Courses with relevant budgetary provisions. However, the Centre for Online Education (COE) of the University shall be the facilitating and coordinating Unit of the University for development, delivery and assessment of learners in Online Programmes with necessary budgetary provisions and technical support infrastructure. EMPC and Computer Division of the University will also provide all support to School(s)/COE in these activities.

III. Statutory Approvals

1. As per the eligibility criteria [Item II (1)], only those Programmes can be offered in Online mode, which are being offered in the ODL mode (with at least one batch having passed out) by the University. Consequently, the curriculum/syllabi of various Courses of the eligible Programmes will remain more or less the same.

2. Thus, the process of seeking approval for offering such Programmes in Online mode from the statutory authorities (School Board, Planning Board/Academic Programmes Committee, and Academic Council) of the University can be expedited by organising Programme Expert Committee meeting to deliberate and finalise the modus operandi regarding the unique features of development of e-content (2) (other than the SLMs and available audio/video for the ODL version of the proposed Programme), delivery and assessment of learners for offering the Programme in Online mode. The deliberations in the Programme Expert Committee will take into consideration the components of an Online Programme as mentioned in Item IV (1) below as well as the items in the Online Programme Approval Form (OPAF) (Annexure 1). The Programme Expert Committee may comprise technology experts from COE and other units of the University to apprise the subject experts about the possibilities and limitations of the technology being used by the University for its Online Programmes.

3. Subsequent to the Programme Expert Committee meeting, the Programme Coordinator(s)/Discipline Group will submit, through the Director of the concerned School, the OPAF for consideration of the School Board. Thereafter, the Programme may be offered with due approval of the Competent Authority. The Planning Board/Academic Programmes Committee and the Academic Council will be intimated about offering of such Programmes and the progress therein.

Approval of Standalone Courses

4. A Coordination Committee for Online Courses (CCOC) will be constituted by the Competent Authority for recommending standalone Course(s) to be offered on SWAYAM platform. For this purpose, the Course proposer/Course Coordinator will submit Online Course Approval Form (OCAF) (Annexure 2) to CCOC.

5. If a Course, which is a part of any duly approved ODL and / or Online Programme of the University, it may be offered on the SWAYAM Portal after due recommendation of CCOC and approval of the Competent Authority.

6. If a Course, which is not a part of any duly approved ODL and / or Online Programme of the University, is to be offered on the SWAYAM Portal, the proposal for the same will be first submitted to CCOC. Afterwards, OCAF of the Course shall be submitted to the School Board of the relevant School of Study, Planning Board, and the Academic Council for consideration and approval. The norms for development, delivery and assessment of such Courses shall be the same as given in these guidelines for the Courses of Online Programmes.

IV. Programme / Course Development

1. The norms for development and delivery of Online Programme/Course of the University shall be the same as the SWAYAM norms suggested from time to time.

2. The procedure for development of e-content of Courses will be as rigorous as that followed for the development of SLMs for the ODL Programmes in the University, that is, the e-content (other than the already developed (and digitised) SLMs of the corresponding ODL Programme) will be created/developed after due statutory approvals and follow the course team approach with the involvement of nationally renowned experts; it will be duly edited and peer reviewed before it is offered to learners.

3. While the Programme Coordinator(s) will coordinate the overall development, delivery and assessment for a Programme, every Course of a Programme shall have a Course Coordinator who will coordinate all the academic aspects of these activities for the Course in consultation with the Programme Coordinator and with the help of Course Team.

4. The external resources (i.e., OERs, MOOCs, etc.) and the contents delivered through social media may be made a part of a Programme/Course only after due approval by the Programme Expert Committee or the Programme Coordination team and the Course team.

5. The infrastructural facilities and professional workforce of the Electronic Media Production Centre (EMPC) shall be used for creation of e-content such as audio and video programmes for the Courses.

6. COE will facilitate and coordinate the creation of such components of the e-content for which in-house facilities (including those at EMPC) are not adequate.

7. The capacity building of teachers and other officials and staff of the University will be undertaken, with active involvement of COE and available in-house experts having experience in this field, by Staff Training and Research Institute of Distance Education (STRIDE) of the University by way of organising training and workshops for familiarization with the technology and Learning Management System (LMS) involved in the development, delivery and assessment in Online Programmes/ Courses.

V. Registration /Admission

1. The admission to the approved Online Programme will be announced through the IGNOU Online Portal (www.iop.ignouonline.ac.in).

2. The Student Registration Division (SRD) shall be the nodal Division for the University for

the registration/admission to the Online Programmes.

3. After finalisation, the admission data will be shared with concerned School(s)/COE for delivery and assessment for the Programmes.

VI.   Delivery of Online Programmes/ Courses

1. The Courses of the Online Programmes will be either delivered through the SWAYAM Portal or any other LMS which the University may decide to use.

2. When an Online Programme is launched, only the first semester courses will be uploaded on SWAYAM portal.

3. The procedure for appointment of external teachers as mentors for the Courses of Online Programmes for synchronous and asynchronous support and continuous assessment of learners will be the same as for the Academic Counsellors for the Programmes in ODL mode.

4. The educational qualifications of mentors from outside IGNOU and the criteria for their selection will be approved by the School Board and the Academic Council. The names of mentors will be recommended by the Course Team following the approved criteria. While recommending the names, the Course Team will take into consideration the familiarity of the prospective mentors with ICTs and the LMS, and their capability to use these for effectively mentoring learners during the delivery of the Programme/Course.

5. The norms for learner support for Online Courses are given at Annexure 3.

6. The infrastructural facilities and professional work force of the Electronic Media Production Centre (EMPC) shall also be used for the delivery of Online Programmes/Courses.

VII.   Assessment of Learners

1. The Student Evaluation Division (SED) of the University will be the nodal Division for the evaluation and certification of learners admitted in Online Programmes.

2. The evaluation methodology for the Online Programmes/ Courses shall be the same as for the corresponding ODL Programmes/Courses.

3. The term-end examination for the Online Programmes will be either conducted through SWAYAM Portal to any other in-house examination portal of the University.

4. For Online Programmes/ Courses University shall conduct examinations either using technology enabled online test with all the security arrangements ensuring transparency and credibility of the examinations, or through the Proctored Examination and in conformity with any other norms for such examination as may be laid down by the UGC.

VIII.   Quality Assurance for Online Programmes/ Courses

1. The Online Programmes/ Courses shall have the e-content as per UGC (Credit Framework for online learning courses through SWAYAM) Regulations, 2021 or as revised from time to time.

2. The e- learning material developed for online Progrmmes/ courses should follow multimedia approach using rich interactive content in the form of video lectures, audio podcasts, self-learning material, animations, simulations, video demonstrations, Virtual Labs, etc. supplemented with web resources such as further references, Related Links, Open-source Content on Internet, Video, Case Studies, books including e-books, research papers and journals, Anecdotal information, Historical development of the subject, Articles, etc.- The courses shall be rich in innovative presentation techniques to ensure that learner attention is retained.

3. Each course in the Online Programme shall have a precise assessment mechanism for the identified learning outcomes at each level for both continuous formative and summative assessments. The Continuous Assessment could be in the form of Multiple-Choice Questions, Fill in the blanks, Matching Questions, Short Answer Questions, Long Answer Questions, Quizzes, Assignments and solutions, Discussion forum topics, Activities, Term papers etc. appropriately decided by the Course Coordinator based on the level, nature and requirement of the Programme/ Courses, .

4. At least 60 per cent. of e-Learning Material shall be developed by the in-house faculty and the remaining 40 per cent of the material can be sourced from available e-resources such as Open Educational Resources (OER), SWAYAM or other source, duly approved by the statutory bodies of the University (School Board, Academic Council and Planning Board);

5. It shall be the responsibility of the Course Coordinator to ensure that none of the graphics, animations, images, sound clips, video clips used are plagiarized or cited without formal permissions from owners.

6. The Online programmes'/ courses delivery shall be through the SWAYAM portal or any other learning management system (LMS) as per the standards specified by the University Grants Commission (Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020.

7. The Programme offered under Online mode shall conform to the condition that apart from the Programme delivery, other components such as Counselling Process, Online Application Processing and fee payment shall also be provided through Online mode.

8. The LMS used for online Programme/ Courses shall have a user-friendly interface and meet accessibility standards for interoperability and access for learners with special needs.

9. The COE shall provide adequate support for advising, counselling, mentoring and guidance so as to ensure the best possible learning experience for the learners and there shall be clear guidelines on academic integrity and netiquette (internet etiquette) expectations regarding lesson activities, group discussions, chats and plagiarism.

10. The Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA) of the University shall coordinate and monitor operationalisation and quality assurance of the Online Programmes/ Courses and shall ensure adherence to the regulations and guidelines issued by UGC and other regulatory authorities.

IX.   Miscellaneous

1. If required, the Academic Council will consider additional issues/policies related to Online Programmes.

2. The fee for the Online Programmes shall be determined as per the norms of the University.

3. The payment norms for various activities involved in development, delivery and assessment for Online Programmes will be decided by the University from time to time**.**

4. The issues which may arise in future and have not been covered by these guidelines will be addressed in the light of the UGC Regulations for Online Programmes notified from time to time.

Explanations:

(1): "…with at least one batch having passed out." means the Programme has been on offer for its minimum duration and the University has conducted Term End Examinations for all its courses. Further, for the purpose of eligibility, a revised version of a Programme shall not be considered as a new Programme; it will suffice if a batch has passed out for the unrevised version of the Programme. However, the Online version of the Programme shall have the curriculum/syllabi of the revised version of the Programme.

(2): 'e-content' refers to the electronic/digital-content which includes text, audio, video, image, graphics, animation, etc. created and delivered through various electronic media. The digitised SLMs (eSLMs) as well as its enriched and improved versions are one of the e-contents for the purpose of Online Programmes/Courses.

ONLINE PROGRAMME APPROVAL FORM

(*For an existing academic programme which is on offer in ODL mode. To be approved by the School Board, Planning Board / Academic Programmes Committee and Academic Council.*)

1. Name of Online Academic Programme:
2. Programme Code (in ODL mode):
3. School of Study:
4. Programme Coordinator(s):
5. Date of Statutory Approval of ODL Programme:
   a) School Board:
   b) Planning Board:
   c) Academic Council:
6. Admission Cycle of ODL Programme:
7. Average enrolment in the ODL Programme in previous three Admission Cycles:
8. Proposed Launch Admission Cycle for the Online Programme:
9. Details of the Courses of the Programme:

SI. No.	Course Code	Course Name	Credits

10. Status of Preparedness:
    I.   Details of e-Contents:
    a) SLM In Digital Form: Yes / No
    b) Video Content: Yes / No / Partially
       i.   Number of 30 minutes Video Programmes Available:
       ii. Number of Video Programmes to be recorded / edited:
       iii. Timeline for Video Content readiness:
    c) Audio Content: Yes / No / Partially
       i.   Number of Audio Programmes Available:
       ii. Number of Audio Programmes to be recorded / edited:
       iii. Timeline for Audio Content readiness:
    d) Other form(s) of e-Content, if any, to be used (*Give details*):

II.   Learner Support:

a) Synchronous counselling/mentoring (Number of Hrs. per Credit):

Method(s) to be used:

b) Asynchronous counselling/mentoring (Number of Hrs. per Credit):

Method(s) to be used:

III.   Evaluation Methodology:

a) Continuous Assessment component:

(*List the methods to be adopted*)

b) Term - End Examination:

Sl. No.	Course Code	Computer Based Exam.		Pen and Paper Exam.	
		Subjective / Descriptive	MCQ / Objective	Subjective / Descriptive	MCQ / Objective

11. Financial Resources Requirement (Approx.):

a)   Digitisation of SLM:
b)   Video Programme Production (Script, Animation, Graphics, External Expert, etc.):
c)   Synchronous Counselling/Mentoring:
d)   Asynchronous Counselling/Mentoring:
e)   Evaluation for Continuous Assessment:
f)   Evaluation for Term-End Examination:

Date:

Place:

Signature of Program Coordinator(s)

Counter Signature of Director of the School of Study

ONLINE COURSE APPROVAL FORM

(*For a Course which is to be offered Online as a standalone Course which is either part of a programme already on offer or NOT approved by the statutory bodies of the University as a part of any approved ODL/Online Programme. A standalone Courses not part of the existing programme has to be first approved by the School Board, Planning Board/ Academic Programmes Committee and Academic Council.*)

12. Name of the Online Course:

13. Number of Credits:

14. School of Study:

15. Course Coordinator(s):

16. Proposed Launch Admission Cycle for the Course:

17. Eligibility for prospective Learner(s):

18. Details of the Course Structure:
    (Also a*ttach the syllabus of the Course*)

19. Details of Development, Delivery and Assessment:

   I.   Details of e-Contents to be used:

   e) SLM In Digital Form: Yes / No

   f) Video Programmes: Yes / No

      iv.   Number of 30 minutes Video Programmes:

      v.   Timeline for Video Content readiness:

   g) Number of Audio Programmes: Yes / No

      i.   Number of Audio Programmes:

      ii.   Timeline for Video Content readiness:

   h) Other form(s) of e-Content, if any, to be used (*Give details*):

   II.   Learner Support:
      c) Synchronous counselling/mentoring (Number of Hrs. per Credit):
          Method(s) to be used:

      d) Asynchronous counselling/mentoring (Number of Hrs. per Credit):

Method(s) to be used:

III.   Evaluation Methodology:
c) Continuous Assessment component:
(*List the methods to be adopted*)

d) Term - End Examination:

Computer Based Exam.		Pen and Paper Exam.	
Subjective / Descriptive	MCQ / Objective	Subjective / Descriptive	MCQ / Objective
Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

20. Any other information:

21. Financial Resources Requirement (Approx.):

g)   Digitisation of SLM:

h)   Video/Audio Programme Production (Script, Animation, Graphics, External Expert, etc.):

i)   Synchronous Counselling/Mentoring:

j)   Asynchronous Counselling/Mentoring:

k)   Evaluation for Continuous Assessment:

l)   Evaluation for Term-End Examination:

Date:

Place:

Signature of Course Coordinator(s)

Counter Signature of Director of the School of Study

Norms for Learner Support for Online Programmes/Courses

Credit value of the Course	Learner – Mentor Interaction		Self-Study (Learner's time for e-Content, Continuous Assessment, etc.)(**in Hrs.**)	Total Study Time of Learner (30 Hrs. per Credit) (**in Hrs.**)
	Synchronous (Online Counselling/Mentoring/Webinars/Interactive Live Lectures) (**2 Hrs. per Credit**) (**in Hrs.**)	**Asynchronous** (Discussion Forum/Off-line Mentoring/etc.) (**4 Hrs. per Credit**) (**in Hrs.**)		
2 Credits	04	08	48	60
4 Credits	08	16	96	120
6 Credits	12	24	144	180
8 Credits	16	32	192	240