**UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE**

**Educating to Change Lives**

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**DIRECTORATE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**e-Distance Learning Methodologies Good Practice Guide**

1. **Preamble**

This guide is a model that has been developed by the Quality Assurance and Professional Development Directorate to recommend the minimum requirements for each teaching and learning unit in a module. The guide is supported by an illustration on how the study material sent to the student is mediated by the module lecturer(s) through strategies such as summaries, PowerPoint presentations, assignments, study instructions and selection of the material for further reading in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 shows how lecturers could facilitate the active and meaningful engagement of the study material, by students, through various modes of digital assessment.

The guide is part of the broader staff development training programme for all academic staff.

1. **e-Distance Learning “Good Practice” Guide**

One of the main differences between online and face-to-face instruction is that; face-to-face lectures involve students and instructors interacting in real time while the online and e-learning approach is at a distance and within a block expected time. Students work through lectures and other learning material at their own pace and without direct interaction with the lecturer. As such, it is important to provide study materials that are structured, comprehensive and mediated by the lecturer. In light of that scenario, what constitutes the study material and the manner in which it is developed, designed and presented to the student becomes critical. The situation that University finds itself separated from the student and face-to-face interaction, has prompted the development of this guide.

* 1. Aim

The guide aims to provide recommendations on designing and developing a “good practice package” for an e-distance learning module.

* 1. Objective

The module lecturers should be able to develop and design a package for a unit in a module following the “Good Practice” guide.

* 1. The Guide

The following items are recommended for a “good practice” e-distance learning package:

* + 1. Module tutor details
		2. Package for Mediated Module Unit
		3. Module Requirements
		4. Teaching and Learning Material
		5. Scheme of Assessment

 Details of each of these are highlighted in the following sections.

* 1. Module Tutor Details

To include the following:

* + 1. Name
		2. Official University of Zimbabwe Email address
		3. Phone number(s)
		4. Online virtual “office” consultation times
	1. Package for a Mediated Module Unit

Each mediated module unit should have the following:

* + 1. Introduction to the Module
		2. A brief on what will be learnt in the Module
		3. Module Aims
		4. Module Learning Outcomes
		5. Expected study time of the study materials
		6. Time period, showing the dates to start and complete the Module.
	1. Module Requirements

For students to satisfactorily complete each Unit, they are expected to go through the following activities:

* + 1. Read the core unit reader material (refer to *Appendix 1*)
		2. Read further materials directed by the module lecturer
		3. Participate in class online discussion(s) on the Unit (specify number of words for the interaction)
		4. Do at least one consultation with the module lecturer
		5. Do a group assignment with peers (refer to *Appendix 2*)
		6. Do a quiz online (refer to *Appendix 2*)
	1. Teaching and Learning Material

The following module material should be uploaded onto the Learning Management System for students to access:

* + 1. Title of units for each Module Topic
		2. Core reader that deals with the major concepts and ideas in the Unit
		3. Either a Power Point presentation with voice over (refer to PowerPoint presentation example), audio or video recording summarising major ideas and core concepts from the core reader (refer to the PowerPoint version of the e-distance learning methodologies on the QA&PD webpage)
		4. Three to four articles for further reading or links to materials
	1. Scheme of Assessment
		1. Outline assignment requirements, specifying the duration and period for each requirement as well as submission dates.
		2. Assign marks to each of the requirements to come up with a weighted mark towards final mark.
	2. Additional notes to the Module Lecturer
		1. A module topic can have four to five units and each of the units need to be mediated following the “Good Practice” guide.
		2. The core reader should be an article or narrative article written by the lecturer and should contain core concepts and ideas about the Unit. The other module content is to consolidate the student understanding.
		3. The Unit requirements are teaching tools to mediate learning for the student.

APPENDIX 1

**e-Distance Learning Instructional Material Sample**

1. **Unit Details**
	1. Module Title
	2. Module Topic
	3. Titles of units
2. **Unit Number and Title**
3. **Learning Objectives**
	1. Welcome the students to the Unit
	2. State the learning objectives
4. **Reflection Questions**

Before going into details of the Unit, give students some questions to reflect on in about 10 minutes.

1. **Unit Structure**

The study material should now go on to present the content of the Unit as follows:

* 1. Introduction
	2. Body
	3. Conclusion
	4. Further work to do
		1. To keep students motivated and encouraged, congratulate them for being able to go through the study material for the Unit 1.
		2. Indicate that they are now expected to finish the Unit by doing the following, for example:
			1. Read the other sources provided in the Unit Package
			2. Complete the quiz
			3. Prepare for Group Assignment
			4. Participate in online discussion
		3. Examples for 5.4.2.2, 5.4.2.3 and 5.4.2.4 are given in *Appendix 2*.

 APPENDIX 2

**e-Distance Learning Digital Assessment**

1. **Purpose**

Each unit should be assessed to:

* 1. Check understanding of the Unit by students.
	2. Ensure that no student is falling through the cracks.
	3. Track active and meaningful participation by and/or of students.
	4. Enhance student-student interaction, student-lecturer interaction, co-construction of knowledge, collaboration and peer assessment.
1. **Flexibility**
	1. There is need to be flexible, but without compromising on quality and rigour, because students may be having challenges with electricity, Internet connectivity and gadgets.
	2. Hence the need for being flexible with submission dates, modes of assessment and consultation times.
2. **Sample Modes of Digital Assessment**

The following modes of assessment could be used for a Unit:

* 1. Individual quiz
	2. Group work with peers
	3. Class online discussion
	4. Assignment

1. **Individual quiz**

An individual quiz consists of about 10 questions which could be Multiple Choice, True/False or Yes/No type. Here are examples:

*The willingness to change to new procedures and new environment by a teacher is best described as:*

* 1. Communication
	2. Creativity
	3. Adaptability
	4. Responsibility

*There are a number of helpful skills that a teacher can acquire, even after having gone through some professional training.*

* 1. True
	2. False
1. **Group work with peers**

The following tasks illustrate how one could engage students as groups:

* 1. Each member of the group should describe their most memorable teacher in high school.
	2. As a group, identify the qualities that make each of those teachers memorable.
	3. Categorise the qualities identified in 2, above, into either positive or negative.
1. **Class Online Discussion**

The nexttwo tasks illustrate how to initiate and employ class discussion virtually:

* 1. ‘Effectiveness of teaching and learning in any school, rests entirely on the teacher.’ Briefly react to this assertion.
	2. Post your response to the discussion forum, then comment on any two (2) other posts on the discussion forum.
1. **Assignment**

With assignments, there is need to consider the following factors: time, length of the write up, competencies to be developed in students, size of class among other things.

1. **Feedback**

Giving feedback is an integral part of teaching and learning.

* 1. Lecturers are urged to always remember to feedback to both individual students as well as the whole class.
	2. Feedback is regarded as part of the module lecturer’s voice and footprint.
1. **Assessment Records**
	1. Digital assessment records should be on the Learning Management System.
	2. ICT personnel can assist on how to use the Gradebook.
	3. The module lecturer should choose pieces of work to be recorded and students should be in the know.