

OPEN UNIVERSITY *of* MAURITIUS



GENERAL RULES

APPLICABLE TO COHORTS
REGISTERED FROM JULY 2022



**OPEN UNIVERSITY of MAURITIUS GENERAL
RULES
(EFFECTIVE FROM JULY 2022)**

The rules and regulations in this document apply to learners registered with the Open University of Mauritius. They define the General Rules the prospective learner should be aware of and form the basis of the registration agreement between the learner and the Open University of Mauritius.

Version 3 - June 2022

GLOSSARY

Academic Council:	Principal academic body of the Open University of Mauritius chaired by the Director-General that controls and regulates all academic activities under the aegis of the Board of the Open University of Mauritius.
Academic Year:	The Academic Year comprises two semesters. It normally starts in January to end in December of the same year. It may also start in July/August of one year to end in June/July of the following year. Under certain circumstances the Academic Year may be modified by the Academic Council.
Advisory Committee:	A committee comprising experts from industry and other academic institutions as well as those familiar with the National Qualifications Framework. The members must have a good understanding of the design and development of programme especially in the field under consideration.
APEL:	Acronym for “Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning” and applied for admission purposes. It is a procedure whereby recognition is given to a learner’s learning and practical experience, deemed to make him/her eligible for a programme, in lieu of the normal academic requirements for same.
APL:	Acronym for “Accreditation of Prior Learning” and applied for admission purposes. Procedure whereby recognition is given to a learner’s academic qualifications other than those normally required for a programme and deemed to be satisfactory alternatives for same.
Appeal:	A request from learner for review of decisions concerning him/her. A learner not satisfied with his/her assessment results may make an appeal to the Registrar or his/her representative for a remarking of his/her paper/s against payment of a fee as determined by the Open University of Mauritius.
Assessment:	Procedure by which a learner’s performance in a module is evaluated and it is made up of continuous assessment and end of semester examination.
Assignment:	Work assigned as part of a learner’s programme of study and is normally counted for his/her assessment (tutor marked or computer marked).
Attachment:	Period during which a learner may be posted in a workplace or in another institution as part of his/her programme of study and normally intended to give him/her practical experience. It may also count for the continuous assessment.
Board of Examiners:	Committee chaired by the Director of Academic Affairs Division or his representative and comprises the examiners of a programme to consider results and make recommendations thereof to the Academic Council for consideration and approval.

CMA:	Computer Marked Assignment.
Continuous Assessment:	Assignments (tutor marked/computer marked), mini projects, class tests, presentations, attachments, practicals given as part of the overall assessment of the module. The weighting of continuous assessment is given in the programme document.
Convocation:	Official ceremony during which certificates, diplomas, degrees and postgraduate degrees and any other approved qualifications are awarded to learners. Honorary degrees may also be awarded.
Core Module:	Compulsory module for a programme is one that must be taken by all learners following that programme. The learners must pass all the core modules in order to obtain the award.
Course:	A course may comprise one or more modules. It may be a subset of a programme.
Coursework:	Coursework means assignment, project, class test, presentation, portfolio, e-portfolio, mini dissertation, practical, posters, research papers, research proposals and any other item as may be prescribed in the programme.
Credit:	One credit represents an academic unit measuring a minimum of 20 hours of learning. An award is based on the basis of a specified number of credits, for example for certain programmes 108 credits earn a degree. A module is worth 3-4 credits and a dissertation counts towards 8-12 credits, unless stated otherwise.
Disciplinary Committee:	Committee chaired by a member of the Academic Council to look into complaints about learners and to make recommendations thereon to the Academic Council for consideration and approval.
Dissertation:	Research-based long essay normally counting towards the award of a diploma, undergraduate degree or postgraduate degree.
Elective:	A module that a learner may choose freely from a prescribed set of modules. The credit rating of an elective module is given in the relevant programme document.
Exemption:	An allowance granted to a learner with respect to a module/course of a programme deemed to have already been fulfilled as recommended by the Director, Academic Affairs/Programme Manager and approved by the Academic Council.
Interruption of Studies:	Period during which a learner is allowed to temporarily discontinue his/her studies on grounds approved by the Academic Council upon recommendation of the Director of the Academic Affairs Division.
GP:	Grade Point - this refers to the points allocated to the various grades used.

GPA:	Grade Point Average.
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology.
Module:	A Unit of study forming part of a programme. A 3 credit module generally requires 60 hours of study.
NQF:	National Qualifications Framework (Mauritius).
The Open University	means The Open University of Mauritius.
OU:	An acronym for The Open University of Mauritius.
ODL:	An acronym for Open Distance Learning.
OFDL:	An acronym for Open Flexible Distance Learning.
Programme:	A combination of a number of modules that form the course of study and lead to a qualification in case of an award programme. A programme is a stand-alone and approved curriculum followed by learners.
Programme Document:	A document that gives essential details about a programme.
Programme Design:	First steps towards creation of a programme. This remains a creative activity of putting together the ingredient that would lead to the development of a programme.
Programme Development:	It is a process of creation of a programme. It involves the development of a content, delivery modes, structure of the curriculum and assessment methods.
Programme Manager:	An Academic Staff responsible for a programme.
Project:	A piece of research-based activity counting towards a qualification in Award programmes.
RPL:	An acronym for Recognition of Prior Learning.
RPE:	An acronym for Recognition of Prior Experience.
Semester:	A study period spread over a period of around six months starting in January/February or in July/August.
Study Calendar:	A study calendar details the learning activities that a learner is expected to undertake including assessment activities within a specified time frame.
Withdrawal:	Termination of a learner's registration for a programme on grounds laid by the Academic Council or at the request of the learner

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INTRODUCTION

The Open University of Mauritius (OU) is a public organisation established by the Open University of Mauritius Act 2010, Act No.2 of 2010. Its main object is to develop and deliver higher education mainly through open flexible distance learning modes. It also offers courses on full-time learning mode. OU is committed to providing opportunities to those who can't attend classes at conventional universities. OU is open to people, places, teaching and learning methods and ideas. Quality accessibility, flexibility, fairness, equity, inclusion, affordability underpin all aspects of OU's operation. OU will continuously endeavour to provide an enabling and high quality learning environment that would help its learners to develop their potential. Feedback from stakeholders (learners, external examiners, examiners, moderators, experts, professional bodies, regulatory bodies and so on) will be gathered regularly and will be used to improve the learning environment, enhance learner engagement and facilitate successful academic, personal and professional progression. OU will also endeavour to enhance employability skills of the learners.

Vision

The vision of the Open University of Mauritius is to be among the best open universities in the world.

Mission

The mission of the Open University of Mauritius is to use technology and flexible mode of teaching to serve society, transform lives, and make high-quality education, lifelong learning, and training accessible to everyone while promoting excellence in research.

Therefore, the Open University of Mauritius endeavours to

- (a) Expand the scope and scale of quality higher education available to school leavers;
- (b) Provide greater access to continuing professional education, skills development and training;
- (c) Provide more opportunities for lifelong learning;
- (d) Play a leading role in research and development and application of learning technologies for education and training;
- (e) Facilitate national, regional and international partnerships and collaborations for the optimal use of resources for open and distance learning; and
- (f) Provide quality open and distance learning programmes in Mauritius and in the region in a learner-centred environment using state-of-the-art information and communication technologies.

Objectives

The objectives of the Open University of Mauritius are to

- (a) Advance and disseminate learning and knowledge through a diversity of means, with emphasis on information and communication technologies;
- (b) Provide wider opportunities for education and training to the population, through open and distance learning, and promote lifelong learning;
- (c) Encourage the use of open and distance learning at all levels of education and training through collaboration, optimal use of existing resources and good practices;
- (d) encourage and promote scholarship and conduct research and development in educational technology and related matters;
- (e) Be the focal point for the provision of open and distance learning in Mauritius through the establishment of active partnerships with local public and private institutions, as well as overseas institutions engaged in providing education and training.

It implies therefore that OU will use a wide range of delivery modes.

This document describes the general rules governing the obligations of OU to deliver the courses and a service of high quality to its learners as well as the conditions of registration of learners on a particular programme including the code of practice for assessment and discipline.

It is the responsibility of the learner to ensure that he/she is familiar with the rules pertinent to his/her registration with OU.

All inquiries regarding admission and registration should be addressed to:

The Registrar

Open University of Mauritius

Réduit

Mauritius

Telephone : (230) 403 8200

Fax : (230) 465 9440

Email : openuniversity@open.ac.mu

1.0 ADMISSION POLICY

As far as possible the OU will have an open access policy with a view to increase access to learning opportunities at tertiary level as stipulated in the Act. OU shall be open to everyone who complies with the admission and registration requirements, abides by the Rules and Regulations of OU, has a good code of conduct as well as meets the academic performance set in the programme documents. OU will conduct recruitment, selection and admission in a professional manner and its procedures will be transparent, clear, explicit and fair.

2.0 REGISTRATION

- 2.1 All newly admitted and continuing OU learners are required to register/re-register at the beginning of the year/semester as per the programme regulations and pay the relevant fees. The time and procedure of registration are announced by the Registrar through press advertisement and other appropriate media. A learner who fails to re-register shall not be recognized as a bona fide learner of OU for that academic year/semester.
- 2.2 Registration can only be confirmed upon payment of the relevant fees. Learners who do not register at the specified time may be required to pay a late registration fee.
- 2.3 OU reserves the right not to run any of the programmes/courses advertised.
- 2.4 Learners should register in the names that appear in their birth certificates or if married according to marriage certificates or otherwise. The official order of names during registration will be: Surname, First Name(s), and Middle Name. Where a learner has only two names in his or her certificates, then only those two names shall be used. Documentary evidence such as National Identity Card, Passport for overseas learners (including evidence for nationality) must be produced. Any subsequent request for change of name(s) may be entertained subject to payment of the prescribed fee.
- 2.5 Learners are required to give details of their address and other particulars when they register. Information provided by the learners at the time of registration shall be kept confidential by OU. It is the responsibility of the learner to inform the Registrar of any change in the personal information provided.
- 2.6 Learners shall not register for more than one programme of OU concurrently. Learners may register for degree award course and one or more non-degree award short courses.
- 2.7 Upon registration, every learner shall be issued with a registration number and the Open University Learner Identity Card which he/she is required to carry with him/her, whenever he/she attends face-to-face sessions as appropriate, enter examination halls/rooms, laboratories, etc. Any loss of the identity card must be reported to the Admissions Office promptly. A new card shall be issued after payment of a fee. Learner identity number, username and password when provided to a learner by OU must not be shared with any other unauthorised person.
- 2.8 The academic year at the Open University of Mauritius normally starts in January/February, for most of its programmes. Undergraduate and postgraduate learners for an academic year will be usually admitted in January/February or July/August except where indicated otherwise. The academic year is divided into two semesters. Examinations are held at the end of each semester.
- 2.9 Learners for short continuous professional development courses are admitted at any time of the year as and when the courses are advertised.

- 2.10 During registration/re-registration exercise, learners will have to indicate the courses of study for that year/semester as well as the assessments that they plan to attempt including any special or supplementary tests and/ or examinations.
- 2.11 It is necessary to note that all assignments, tests, planner for face-to-face sessions and so on will be directed only to those learners who are duly registered in that academic year/semester.
- 2.12 The deadline for change of academic programme and registration for all learners will be four weeks from the first date of the induction session. A fee will be charged for any request to change of programme.
- 2.13 A learner who has been allowed interruption of studies by the Academic Council remains a registered learner of OU for the period he/she is registered. The learner has to pay a fee to maintain his/her registration within the period prescribed in the programme document.
- 2.14 A learner who is withdrawn from a programme on the recommendation of the Director, Academic Affairs Division and approval of the Academic Council shall be deemed to have terminated his/her registration with OU.
- 2.15 A learner is required to sign a statement of undertaking as per **Appendix 1**.
- 2.16 OU will not discriminate learners on the basis of gender, race, colour, creed, religion, age, caste, sexual orientation, pregnancy, genetic information, marital status and disability.

3.0 ADMISSION PROCEDURES

- 3.1 All programmes will be advertised. Prospectus and application forms will be available on OU website www.open.ac.mu and at the Admission Office, Open University of Mauritius, Réduit, Mauritius. In case learners have difficulties in downloading the forms, they are requested to contact the Admission Office.
- 3.2 OU shall provide all necessary information in order to help prospective learners to make informed decisions.
- 3.3 Applications duly completed together with the receipt of payment of a non-refundable application fee should be sent to the Admissions Office by the date specified. Applicants from Non-SADC (Southern African Development Community) will be required to pay in another fee.

4.0 GENERAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

4.1 A General Entry Requirements under Direct Entry to Certificate Programmes:

- (i) either Cambridge School Certificate with at least three credits or equivalent

or

- (ii) submission of a comprehensive portfolio for possible recognition of prior learning/ experience (RPL/RPE) as an alternative to above along with evidence for the language/ numeracy/ICT skills required for the programme of study.

4.2 **A General Entry Requirements under Direct Entry to Diploma Programmes**

Applicants should fulfill the following conditions:

OPTION 1

Cambridge School Certificate with at least three credits or equivalent

and

either Two passes at Principal Level (A-Level) (in appropriate subjects as indicated in the specific programme requirements)

or An appropriate equivalent Certificate/Foundation programme accepted by OU.

OPTION 2

Submission of a comprehensive portfolio for possible recognition of prior learning/experience (RPL/RPE) as an alternative to above along with evidence for the language/numeracy/Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills required for the programme of study.

4.3 **General Entry Requirements under Direct Entry to Undergraduate Programmes**

Applicants should fulfill the following conditions:

OPTION 1

A pass in English Language at Cambridge School Certificate/ 'O' Level or equivalent

and

EITHER Pass in:

3 subjects at A-level and 1 subject at the subsidiary level at Higher School Certificate Examination;

OR Pass in:

2 subjects at A-level and 2 subjects at a subsidiary level at the Higher School Certificate Examination;

OR Pass in:

3 subjects at A-level at the London General Certificate Examination.

or

The French Baccalaureate

or

The International Baccalaureate

or

School Certificate or GCE O-Level and Either Diploma/Certificate pitched at least to level 5 in the National Qualifications Framework of the Mauritius Qualifications Authority or Foundation Course awarded by a recognised Higher Education Institution.

or

Grade 12 Certificates/Higher Secondary School Certificate or equivalent from India

or

West African Senior School Certificate

or

South African Senior Certificate

or

Grade 12 Certificates/High School Certificate from other countries equivalent to Cambridge Higher School Certificate

or

any other qualifications acceptable to OU.

NOTE

- a) The General Entry Requirements should be applied to all programmes where Entry Requirements are not governed by Professional Bodies and Accreditation Bodies.
- b) The Programme Entry Requirements should be applied as per the approved Programme Document by Academic Council in addition to General Entry Requirements
- c) Qualifications awarded by other recognised institutions and approved by Chairperson of Academic Council as satisfying the minimum requirements for admission can be considered.
- d) Applicants may be also admitted based on Special Cases where they do not satisfy the requirements as per Regulations 4.3 and as per programme requirements but submit satisfactory evidence of having passed examinations or satisfactory evidence of attainments which deemed by the Chairperson of Academic council to be equivalent to any of those listed above.

- e) The attention of the applicants is drawn to the fact that eligibility for employment in some sectors in Mauritius may require possession of a minimum of five credits at 'O' level and/or two 'A' levels including a credit in English language at 'O' level and in some cases, such requirements may be conditional to have been obtained at one and same sitting.

Learners who do not qualify under Option 1 may register for Foundation Courses offered by OU. Learners must successfully complete four modules at the level of Foundation in order to be eligible to apply for undergraduate programmes.

4.3.1 General Entry requirements on Foundation Programmes

Candidates having at least 25 years of age and who have Cambridge School Certificate or GCE O-Level with at least three credits or equivalent

or

Candidates having less than 25 years of age and who have Cambridge School Certificate or GCE O-Level with at least three credits or equivalent and One Pass at Principal A-Level

OPTION 2

Submission of a comprehensive portfolio for possible recognition of prior learning/experience (RPL/RPE) as an alternative to above along with evidence for the language/numeracy/ICT skills required for the programme of study with a minimum of Cambridge School Certificate or GCE O-Level with at least three credits or equivalent.

4.4 General Entry Requirements under Direct Entry to Postgraduate Programmes

Successful completion of an undergraduate degree with

- at least a Second Class or 50%, whichever is applicable or
- a GPA not less than 2.5 out of 4 or equivalent, from a recognised Higher Education Institution.

or

an Ordinary Degree or a non-honours degree from a recognized University with at least two years of work experience in the relevant field which demonstrate that a candidate possesses appropriate knowledge and skills at a standard acceptable by the Academic Council.

or

possesses a Bachelor's degree with an award below a Second-Class degree from a recognised institution and has at least two years of relevant working experience.

or

alternative qualifications acceptable to the Open University of Mauritius.

NOTE

- (1) Applicants may also be admitted based on special cases as mature students (Refer to section 4.9).
- (2) The two years of relevant work experience may be acquired either before or after the date mentioned in the Bachelor's Degree.

4.5 General Entry Requirements under Direct Entry to Postgraduate Programmes leading to the award of a Doctorate Degree (e.g DBA).

Applicants should fulfill the following conditions:

- (i) A Master's level Degree, either an MBA or a specialist MA or MSc in a related area;

and

- (ii) Evidence of substantial management or professional work experience, including within the academic profession (as indicated in the specific programme requirements).

Prior Learning and Prior Experiential Learning may be considered by OU for admission to this programme. Applicants may be asked to pass an entry test.

or

Any other alternative qualifications acceptable to OU.

4.6 General Entry Requirements under Direct Entry to PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) programme.

Applicants should fulfill the following conditions:

- (i) A Master's level degree in the related area.
- (ii) Applicants with undergraduate degrees may be considered but they would only be allowed to register for an MPhil/PhD degree. They can eventually request for a transfer from MPhil/PhD to PhD.

or

Any other alternative qualifications acceptable to OU.

4.7 Specific Programme Requirements

The specific programme requirements are given in the relevant award as well as non-award courses/programmes documents and OU website.

- 4.8 Applicants who have not yet been admitted to the programme they have applied for, can appeal as well as register their complaints by writing a letter with all the details to the Registrar. The Registrar or his/her representative shall attend to the appeals or complaints expeditiously and inform the applicant within a reasonable time.

4.9 Mature Students

4.9.1 Undergraduate Programmes

Candidates having credit in at least three (3) subjects at School Certificate/ 'O' Level

and

who are at least 25 years of age and who have at least 5 years' relevant work experience but do not satisfy the General Entry Requirements.

4.9.2 Postgraduate Programmes

Candidates who are older in terms of age (> 30 years) and do not have the General Entry Requirements for admission at the Open University of Mauritius but have a minimum of:

either

A recognised undergraduate Diploma in a relevant field or any other equivalent qualifications acceptable to the University plus at least 7 years of relevant work experience;

or

A third class or pass degree in relevant field plus at least 3 years of relevant work experience.

5.0 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING/EXPERIENCE (RPL/RPE) OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

- 5.1 With a view to widen access to learning opportunities, the OU considers for admission mature learners who may not possess the academic qualification requirements. Mature learners having a strong background of work experience and uncertified learning may be assessed for entry to programmes through the Accreditation of Prior learning (APL) and the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) caters for applicants having qualifications other than the 'General Entry Requirements' and 'Programme Entry Requirements' for the programme applied for.

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) caters for applicants, often mature, having at least three years of work experience relevant to the programme applied for, but with limited qualifications, i.e. often no "A" levels.

The assessment of prior experiential learning is subject to the following guiding principles:

5.1.1 The responsibility rests with the applicant for making a claim to have acquired knowledge and skills assessed and for supporting the claim with appropriate evidence.

5.1.2 The learning derived from experience must be identified in order to be assessed.

Academic assessment is the responsibility of APL/APEL committee/academic staff/ Programme Manager, who may use the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and employ any procedure relevant to the field to arrive at an academic judgement about the evidence of prior learning submitted. The relevant recommendations are then forwarded to the Academic Council for consideration and approval. The approach will be governed by the nature of the course/programme for which APEL is appropriate.

5.1.3 Applicants granted exemption on module(s) through prior experiential learning or prior learning will have their overall percentage mark for the year/level of study determined only from the number of modules in which they were examined.

5.1.4 Requests for APL/APEL exemptions, for any level of the programme are to be submitted at least fifteen working days before the start of a programme.

5.2 **Accreditation of prior Learning (ApL)**

The APL Committee will assess the documentation submitted by the applicant including:

- Duly filled in Application Form
- Certified copies of syllabi undertaken
- Certified copies of examinations results with grades
- A reference from institution where previously studied.

If necessary, the APL Committee will interview the applicants. It will send a recommendation concerning the applicants to the Director of Academic Affairs Division who will in turn recommend to the Academic Council accordingly. The final decision on entry to OU rests with the Director-General/Academic Council.

5.3 **Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)**

The APL/APEL Committee will assess the documentation and a written statement submitted by the applicant including:

- Duly filled-in Application Form
- Certified copies of syllabi undertaken
- Certified copies of examinations results with grades
- Evidence of work experience and social responsibilities, detailing skills developed and practical knowledge acquired
- A statement from employer(s) detailing the work experience acquired and other responsibilities shouldered during the period of employment.

If necessary, the Committee will interview the applicants and will send a recommendation concerning the applicants to the Director of Academic Affairs Division who will in turn recommend to the Academic Council accordingly. The final decision on entry to OU programmes rests with the Director-General/Academic Council.

5.4 **Admission with Academic Credit or Exemption**

Learners may be admitted to a programme of study with recognition of their prior learning in two categories, at the discretion of the Academic Council: Admission with academic credit or Admission with Exemption.

5.4.1 Admission with Academic Credit

mission with academic credit is awarded in cases where the applicant has already successfully completed some study in higher education elsewhere, which may be counted towards the Open University qualification.

5.4.2 Admission with Exemption

Exemption is given where the Academic Council is satisfied that a learner has suitable prior learning that allows him/her to achieve the aims and objectives of the programme. The Director, Academic Affairs Division/relevant Programme Manager will examine the applications on a case by case basis and submit the relevant recommendations to the Director-General/Academic Council for consideration/approval.

5.5 Request for Exemption

Request for exemption must be made at least fifteen working days before the start of the programme by filling the Request for Exemption Form at **Appendix 2**. The request will be considered by an Exemption Committee comprising

- Director, Academic Affairs Division
- The Programme Manager
- One Academic Staff, designated by the Director, Academic Affairs Division
- Any co-opted member as felt necessary by the Director, Academic Affairs Division
- Representative of the Registrar as the Secretary.

The Committee will examine the request submitted with all evidences including certified copies of the syllabi, examination results/grades, the date when the courses were taken, and so on.

The basis of the criteria will comprise but not be limited to

- Relevance of contents of module;
- Recognition of qualifications submitted; and
- The time when the learner had obtained the qualification.

Qualification under consideration should have been obtained within the past 10 years from the date of application for exemption.

After examination of the request, the Committee will recommend to the Director-General/Academic Council that has the final decision regarding exemption.

6.0 PROGRAMME OF STUDY

- 6.1 A programme of study is the approved curriculum followed by an individual learner. In the absence of a national curriculum for tertiary education, all programmes of study must be subject to course regulations approved by the Academic Council of OU. Each approved programme is governed by a programme document available to learners setting out: the title, the aims, objectives and learning outcomes, the regulations on the admission, duration, assessment and curriculum inclusive of the credit system. Programmes must be developed taking into consideration several aspects including demand of the market; demand of the learners; ability of learners to offer the programme; and approval from authorities such as the Medical Council. Programmes are continually evaluated and revised to improve the learning

experience for learners and ensure that the curriculum is relevant. OU shall maintain high academic standards and endeavour to provide the best learning experience by establishing an effective process of design, development and approval of programmes. OU shall apply the approved processes systematically. All programmes must be thoroughly discussed at the Advisory Committee level to ensure that the programme meets its intended objectives (including the knowledge, understanding and skills that learners are expected to gain). The number of credits is allocated judiciously to every module. A proper balance must be maintained among workload of student, volume and nature of assessment progression through the programme increasing intellectual demand, practical and academic study, use of technology, use of self-learning materials, breadth and depth of subject content and opportunities for personal and academic development. Programmes must be reviewed at regular intervals.

6.2 Course/Module

Each programme of study comprises a number of Courses/modules.

6.3 Credit System

OU follows the credit system for most of its programmes. Each credit in the University's system is equivalent to a minimum of 20 hours of study including all learning activities (i.e. reading and comprehending the print material, listening to audio, watching videos, attending tutorials/counselling sessions, writing assignment responses and preparation for the examinations). An award is based on the basis of a specified number of credits, for example 108 credits earn a degree. A module is worth 3-4 credits and a dissertation counts towards 8-12 credits, unless stated otherwise.

6.3.1 A learner needs a minimum of 36 credits for a Certificate, 60 for a Diploma, 102 for a Degree, 16 for a Postgraduate Certificate, 30 for a Postgraduate Diploma and 42 for a Master's Programme. The actual number of credits will be specified in the programme document.

Programme	Minimum number Credits	Minimum Learning hours per week	Duration in years, except otherwise stated	
			Minimum	Maximum
Foundation Course	32	15-20	1	2
Certificate	36		1	2
Diploma	60		2	4
Undergraduate Degree	102		3	6
Postgraduate Certificate	16		6 months	1
Postgraduate Diploma	30		1	3
Masters	42		2	4

6.4 Credit Transfer

Learners, who have successfully completed some relevant study in higher education elsewhere, may be considered for credit transfer. The credits gained may be counted towards OU qualification subject to approval by the Director-General upon the recommendation of the Director of Academic Affairs Division on a case by case basis. This can be done by transferring the appropriate number of credits subject to a maximum number of the credits for a given programme. Learners must apply for credit transfer. Till such time that the credit transfer has been approved, learners must register for all modules. Such application must be submitted at least fifteen working days before the induction session.

7.0 PROGRAMME DELIVERY

Normally programmes of OU are delivered through OFDL with relevant learner support as well as on full-time basis. Learners essentially learn on their own, interacting with the learning materials, with tutors and peers. The learning materials may be in print or electronic format. Face-to-face sessions may be organised to facilitate the live interactions and sharing of learning experiences for OFDL learners. Interaction with Programme Manager and the tutors is also possible through email online conference and SMS (Short Message Service). Programmes may be delivered through a mixed/flexible or full-time mode. Learners must not share their username and password to access OU computer system where relevant.

8.0 LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES

Support services are available to prospective and current learners in terms of information, clarification and guidance as well as counselling on various aspects of proposed studies. These include:

- Programmes available or Programmes currently on offer
- Counselling
- Peer-group Interactions
- Guidance on choice of programmes and courses
- When and how to study and when to seek academic guidance
- Administrative support including assistance for registration and general guidance
- A programme delivery schedule
- Study skills development through study skills sessions
- Tutorial support including possible face-to-face sessions
- Reference materials in the Library
- Computer/ICT facilities/photocopy facilities
- Individual coaching through comments and feedback on tutor marked assignments.

Details on learner support for specific programmes are given in the programme document.

9.0 LEARNING RESOURCES

The payment of programme/course fees entitles the learner to receive most of his/her individualised learning resources. Learning resources include, but are not limited to textbooks, learner manuals, access to e-learning platform, study guides, tutorial assistance where provided and other instructional materials required to complete the course for the period of active registration. For regulations regarding the use of the library and ICT facilities, please refer to **Appendices 3 and 4** respectively.

10.0 THE TUTOR

The tutor will conduct tutorial sessions, give lectures to full-time learners as well as assist the learners throughout their course/programme either by phone or email or the e-learning platform. Tutors offer subject-matter assistance, engage in tutorials, marked assignments, provide feedback, guide learners in their projects/dissertations and help prepare learners for examinations together with the Programme Manager. He or she is the learners' main link with OU. Learners are advised to participate actively in these interactions and establish a permanent form of dialogue to enhance their learning experiences.

- 10.1 After registration in an individualized course/programme, an e-letter containing the tutor's name, address, email address, phone number and tutor hours will be dispatched to the learners. Materials may be uploaded on a Tablet or PC and given to learners enrolled on degree programmes
- 10.2 Learners may contact their tutor on the course/programme start date to discuss the programme of study and agree on possible nature of their interactions with the tutor.

11.0 E-ACCESS TO THE TUTOR AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Learners may interact with their tutors through various modes (phone at mutually agreed times, email message, etc.). Learners can access their learning materials online for some programmes. **Learners should never share their username and password with other individuals.**

12.0 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION FOR LEARNERS

- 12.1 General official communications addressed to learners may be placed on official University notice boards in the Library or the University's website as appropriate.
- 12.2 Individual official communications to learners may be sent by post, through email, SMS or collected from the Library.
- 12.3 It is the responsibility of learners to ensure that they acquaint themselves with the contents of all notices posted on the official notice boards or the university's website or the media. The contents of any notice posted on University Notice Boards/University's website will be assumed to be known to learners.
- 12.4 Notices must not be posted on official notice boards/website without the permission of the Registrar. The Registrar has the authority to remove unauthorised notices and notices posted other than on officially designated notice boards.
- 12.5 It is compulsory that all correspondence between learners and their tutors be copied to Student Support Unit to ensure prompt follow-up action and also as evidence in case of any dispute/grievance.

13.0 INTERRUPTION, WITHDRAWAL AND DEFERRAL OF REGISTRATION

13.1 Interruption of Studies

A learner may be allowed to interrupt his/her studies for a period of two (2) semesters, renewable for one more period of up to two (2) semesters on emergency grounds, e.g. medical or non-emergency grounds e.g. professional obligations or financial constraints subject to the approval of the Director- General upon recommendation of the Director of Academic Affairs Division. However, these semesters would be considered as semesters completed with regards to the maximum period allowed for the period of study in the appropriate Programme of Studies. The request for interruption must be made using the application form at **Appendix 5**.

- Request for interruption of studies will normally not be entertained during the first year of an undergraduate programme.
- The number of interruption of studies shall normally be limited to two for each learner on a given programme.
- All requests must be made at least two months before its effective date. In urgent circumstances requests may be considered on a case by case basis.

For programmes being offered through partnerships, the regulations as specified by the awarding body will prevail.

13.2 A person shall cease to be a registered learner of the University:

- Upon completion of the programme of study for which he/she registered;
- If he/she withdraws from the University
- If he/she does not satisfy the assessment conditions; and
- If he/she is required to withdraw from the University under any of the University's Regulations; and
- If he/she does not settle all the necessary fees within the prescribed period and if he/she does not abide by the rules and regulations of OU.

(See section 16.6 as well)

13.3 Withdrawal from the University

Withdrawal is the process by which a registered learner stops his/her studies before achieving the qualification desired and does not intend to resume his/her studies at a later date. If he/she withdraws from study, he/she will cease to be a learner of the University. A learner may withdraw at any time.

- 13.3.1 Any registered learner wishing to withdraw from a course/programme of study has to complete a withdrawal form if he/she wishes to completely withdraw at any time from the University even if he/she has not attended any lectures. The prescribed form can be obtained from the Admission and Learner Records Office and at the Library (**Appendix 6**). Failure to fill the withdrawal form will result in "U" grade [Ungraded] for all modules registered and non-reimbursement of course fee, if applicable. Refund of course fee, where applicable, will be based on the date of withdrawal and as per the University's refund policy as per **Appendix 7**. The learner has to complete and sign the withdrawal form. Prior to submitting the form, the learner must

obtain the relevant clearances from the Finance Office, learner support registry, and the learning resource centre regarding outstanding debts, learning materials, and so on. The learner has to submit the duly completed form, the relevant clearances and the University identity card issued to him/her to the Registrar's Office. The Registrar's Office will inform the Academic Affairs Division of the withdrawal of the learner for necessary action through the Admission Office.

13.3.2 Procedure for Administrative Withdrawal

Upon receipt of the request and or after consultation with the Programme Manager, the Director of Academic Affairs Division will recommend to the Registrar that a learner be administratively withdrawn. The Director of Academic Affairs Division/Programme Manager will make a written recommendation, specifying the grounds for withdrawal for consideration/approval by the Academic Council. The learner will have to be informed in writing by the Registrar (upon approval of recommendation), of the proposed recommendation for withdrawal and the reasons. If the learner does not respond within fourteen working days of the mailing of said notice the learner will be administratively withdrawn, and the Registrar shall notify the Director of Academic Affairs Division of the withdrawal of the learner.

13.4 Closure of Programme

OU will protect the academic interests of learners when a programme is closed. Support will be provided to learners even if there is no new entrants.

14.0 FEES PAYABLE

14.1 The fee structure for the following will be reviewed at regular intervals and will be published on the website of OU.

Application fees – See 14.1.1 below

Programme/course fees (please refer to para 14.1.14 in this section)

- Non-award short courses
- Certificate programmes
- Diploma programmes
- Degree programmes
- Fee per module for Certificate/Diploma/Degree
- Postgraduate programmes
- Fee per module for postgraduate programmes
- Learner Union fee

14.1.1 A non-refundable application fee as determined by the University is payable by all upon submission of application forms.

14.1.2 Fees are payable upon registration/re-registration/at the beginning of the semester. Late registration fee is applicable after the deadline for registration.

14.1.3 A re-sit fee per module is applicable in case of re-sit(s) payable in advance.

14.1.4 Programme/course fees payable as published in the prospectus for the programme of study.

- 14.1.5 Learners, who fail to pay fees due, may not be allowed to sit for any examination subsequently.
Under no circumstances would results be released and certificates awarded to such learners.
- 14.1.6 A learner is not permitted to register if he/she is indebted to the University, except, with the permission of the Registrar.
- 14.1.7 Degrees or qualification of the University shall be issued to a learner only after he/she has discharged all his/her financial obligations to the University.
- 14.1.8 The University reserves the right to alter fees or other charges without notice.
- 14.1.9 Refund of programme/course fees paid may be considered exceptionally as per the University's refund policy (**Appendix 7**).

15.0 ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The assessment policies, regulations and processes of OU will be explicit, fair, transparent and accessible to all learners. OU will recruit competent people as moderators, examiners and external examiners. By giving access to previous examination papers, mark schemes and related documents, OU will help learners to develop an understanding of and the necessary skills to demonstrate good academic practice. The purpose of assessment/evaluation is to enable learners to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the objectives of the programme of study and achieved the academic/technical/ professional standard required for the award they seek. OU requires all programmes of study to be subject to programme regulations. These relate to the assessment requirements of the programme to its objectives and it is within these course/module assessment regulations that examiners assess learner performance. OU will operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment that will allow learners to demonstrate what they have learnt. OU will ensure that the academic standard for each award of credit or a qualification is rigorously set and maintained at the appropriate level, and that student performance is equitably judged against this standard.

15.1 The Evaluation System

OU has adopted a three-pronged approach to learner evaluation as follows: -

- (a) Evaluation, through devices built into the learning materials for learner self-assessment as learners also learn from assessment activities;
- (b) Continuous evaluation, through any combination of theory-based tutor marked assignments, computer marked assignments, mini-projects, portfolios, practical assignments, and so on as appropriate; and
- (c) End of semester evaluation, through examinations twice a year. For programmes with a project/dissertation component, the evaluation methodology may also include a viva voce.

Self-Assessment Exercises/Activities

A number of exercises and activities are provided within the body of study materials for the learners to evaluate themselves as their studies progress. They are only meant to provide a mechanism to assess what was adjudged to have been learnt by the learners.

15.2 Evaluations towards the module score are conceived, developed and administered

on a rigorous and fair basis to bring out the best in learners and prepare them for and assist them in challenging careers. A learner's performance as per his/her final module score is based on:

- Continuous assessment.
- End of semester assessment

The weighting of each component is detailed in the respective programme document.

15.2.1 Continuous Assessment

Continuous assessment comprises normally Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs) but can also include computer marked assignments depending on the programme as described in the programme document. This document also contains details regarding tutor marked assignments/computer marked assignments for each course. The marks obtained would be used to compute the continuous assessment portion of the final course/module assessment. Learners have to do and submit their TMA to their tutors. Learners are personally held responsible if their assignments do not reach their tutors before the deadline for submissions and no excuses will be entertained. TMAs will be marked, returned to learners with relevant comments to enhance learner learning experiences and records kept for use to form part of learners' overall course/module assessment. OU endeavours so that feedback on assessment is timely, constructive and developmental.

15.2.2 End of Semester Examinations

Written examinations are normally held at the end of each semester or as described in the programme document. End of semester may also comprise computer based examination depending on the programme as described in the programme document.

15.3 Pass Mark

In each course/module, a learner should secure at least 40% consolidated marks in each continuous assessment and end of semester examinations to pass. It is compulsory for learners to submit the continuous assessment (wherever applicable) and take the examination (wherever applicable).

16.0 GRADING SYSTEM

16.1 It is important that the policy of the University on examination grades be properly understood by every learner. For all examinations in OU, the letter grade system is used. These are:

Marks (x) %	Description	Letter Grade	Grade point
$X \geq 70$	Excellent	A	5
$60 \leq X < 70$	Very Good	B	4
$50 \leq X < 60$	Good	C	3
$40 \leq X < 50$	Satisfactory	D	2
$X < 40$	Ungraded	U	0

16.2.1 For a student to pass a module, an overall total of 40% for combined continuous assessment (usually having a weighting of 30%) and written

examination components (usually having a weighting of 70%) would be required without minimum thresholds within the individual continuous assessment and written examination.

16.2.2 Learners can re-sit up to a maximum of two modules where grade "U" has been obtained.

16.2.3 Learners will normally not be allowed to postpone more than two modules for the following semester.

16.2.4 If a learner obtains grade "U" in three or more modules in the same semesters, and the CPA is below 40 for that semesters, the learner will be requested to repeat the semester unless decided otherwise by the Academic Council. When repeating a semester, a learner may or may not take the modules for which Grade C or above have been obtained.

16.2.5 Learners will not be allowed to repeat more than two semesters during the entire duration of the programme (see section 16.6 as well).

16.3 Grade Point Average (GPA)

At the end of the examinations, the learner's work is graded or marked and scores allotted. Though the raw scores will also be recorded, they are further weighed to produce a single point average no matter how many courses a learner registered for and for which the learner has written the examinations. The Grade Point Average (GPA) shall be computed by multiplying the Grade Point (GP) attained in each course/module by the course/module credits and then summed up and divided by the total credits taken in a semester. As an example consider the following:

Course	% Scores	Credit Unit	Letter Grade	Grade Point	Weighted Grade Point
BAXX1	64	4	B	4	4x4=16
BAXX2	71	3	A	5	3x5=15
BAXX3	44	4	D	2	4x2=8
BAXX4	59	3	C	3	3x3=9
BAXX5	82	4	A	5	4x5=20
BAXX6	62	8	B	4	8x4=32
Total		26			100
GPA = 100/26 = 3.85					

Cumulative Point (or percentage) Average (CPA)

CPA is calculated by multiplying the module credit by the % marks for the module and then summed up and divided by the total credits attempted over the cumulative period (1 semester, 1 year or at the end of the programme).

Course	% Scores	Credit unit	Module Credit x % Score
BAXX1	64	4	256
BAXX2	71	3	213
BAXX3	44	4	176
BAXX4	59	3	177
BAXX5	82	4	328
BAXX6	62	8	496
Total		26	1,646
CPA = 1,646/26 = 63.31			

16.4 Classification of Awards

The award classification is based on the CPA accumulated at the end of the programme.			
1	Postgraduate Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master's Postgraduate Diploma Postgraduate Certificate 	Distinction Merit Pass No Award	CPA ≥ 70 60 ≤ CPA < 70 40 ≤ CPA < 60 CPA < 40
2	Undergraduate Degree Programmes	1 st Class with Honours Class 1 st Division with Honours Class 2 nd Division with Honours Class Pass	CPA ≥ 70 60 ≤ CPA < 70 50 ≤ CPA < 60 45 ≤ CPA < 50 40 ≤ CPA < 45
3	Diploma	Distinction Pass No Award	CPA ≥ 70 40 ≤ CPA < 70 CPA < 40
4	Certificate	Distinction Pass No Award	CPA ≥ 70 40 ≤ CPA < 70 CPA < 40

16.5 If a learner is unable to clear any of the courses/modules, he/she has to reappear for the relevant paper by applying to the University through the Examination Entry form along with relevant fees, within the due date specified by the University.

16.6 A person shall cease to be a registered student of the University if his/her CPA remains below 40 for two consecutive registered semesters, unless decided otherwise by the Academic Council. Students whose CPA remains below 40 for two consecutive registered semesters (including semesters that have been repeated

by the learner) may be allowed, subject to approval by the Board of Examiners and Academic Council, to continue with the programmes provided:

- (i) at least 75% of number of credits required for the degree have already been earned; and
- (ii) the maximum allowable duration of the programme, as specified in the structure, has not been exceeded.

17.0 EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

Examination constitutes a very important aspect of the University activities and the University wishes to state firmly that the conduct of its examinations is taken seriously. The University will not condone any form of examination misconduct/irregularity. OU will endeavour to ensure that processes for making assessments and for moderating marks are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process.

- 17.1 The conduct of the University examinations shall be under the general control of the Academic Council.
- 17.2 Examiners and assessors shall be appointed by the Academic Council upon the recommendation of the Director of Academic Affairs Division.
- 17.3 Dates, venue and times for examinations as specified in the examinations time tables shall be published under the authority of the Academic Council.
- 17.4 All learners of OU should adhere to the rules and regulations guiding examinations because of the seriousness attached to examinations by the University. Attention of all learners is drawn to the following:
 - (a) Examinations shall normally take place at the end of the Semester along with re-sit examinations as defined in the Regulations applicable to the programme of study.
 - (b) Information on factors that could adversely affect the performance of a learner in Examinations should be brought to the attention of the Director of Academic Affairs Division in writing well before the results of the learner are referred to the Board of Examiners.
 - (c) Award classifications shall be based on the learner's performance in continuous assessment and end of semester examinations as determined by the Academic Council.
- 17.5 The Head of the Examination Unit shall be the Chief Examination Officer for all Examinations of the University and shall be responsible for the organisation of the Examinations and the release of results once they have been approved by the Academic Council; provisional results will be released after approval by the Board of Examination.
 - 17.5.1 The Registrar shall ensure that provisional and final examination timetables are communicated promptly to all concerned and posted on the University's website;
 - 17.5.2 Representations from learners regarding matters connected with examinations should be made to the Head of the Examination Unit in writing.

17.6 Examiners

- 17.6.1 The examiner in any module shall normally be one of the persons who authored/tutored the module, where applicable;
- 17.6.2 Moderators shall be appointed by the Head of Examination Unit upon recommendation of the Director of Academic Affairs Division in the manner it shall prescribe;
- 17.6.3 Examination papers shall be agreed upon with the moderator where appropriate;
- 17.6.4 In the event of serious divergence of opinion between the moderator and the examiner, the Board of Examiners shall make the final recommendation to the Director of Academic Affairs Division/Academic Council;
- 17.6.5 Every moderator is to submit the Moderators' Report Form to the Registrar's office within seven successive days subsequent to the relevant Board of Examiners for initial scrutiny by the Director-General.
- 17.7 OU will spare no effort to prevent, identify, investigate and respond to unacceptable academic practice related to assessment including plagiarism, cheating, collusion and impersonation. OU will ensure that assessment is carried out securely.
- 17.8 External examiners, having doctoral degree with at least five years' academic experience, will be appointed for every degree award programme.

18.0 BOARD OF EXAMINERS

There shall be a Board of Examiners for semester examinations and re-sit examinations; The Board of Examiners shall comprise:

- (a) The Director of Academic Affairs Division (Chairperson);
- (b) The Programme Managers concerned;
- (c) Examiners and Moderators where appropriate;
- (d) Any co-opted member;
- (e) The Registrar or his Representative to act as the Secretary. The Chairperson and three other members shall constitute the quorum.

19.0 ADMISSION TO EXAMINATIONS

- 19.1 Subject to any exception approved by the Academic Council, no learner shall normally be admitted to an examination unless it is certified on the Examination Entry form that he/she has submitted the tutor marked assignments and completed the prescribed programmes of study and there is evidence of no outstanding payment to the University. Learners who have to resubmit the tutor marked assignments must do so within three weeks of receipt of their assignment marks. These learners may exceptionally be allowed to sit for the examinations. In case of doubt, learners may be allowed to take the examination after producing their Learner Identity Card. In this case, the Chief Invigilator must submit a special report to the Head of the Examination Unit.
- 19.2 A learner who does not submit his Examination Entry form to the Head of Examination Unit through the Director of Academic Affairs Division duly filled in and signed, by a specified date, shall normally not be admitted to the examinations.
- 19.3 The Academic Council shall have the power to recognise examinations passed at other Universities or institutions. Such recognition, if granted, shall be given at the beginning of the academic year/semester in which admission is secured. Learners must register and follow all relevant modules till such time that the approval is obtained.
- 19.4 Upon recommendation of the Director, Academic Affairs Division, the Academic Council may also terminate the registration of a learner who does not satisfy the examiners in aspects of examinations, tutor marked assignments and other forms of assessment during any semester. Evidence of illness supported by a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner or other extenuating circumstances shall receive special consideration.

20.0 EXAMINATION TIMES, PRESENCE AND ADMISSION TO THE EXAMINATION VENUE

20.1 Learner's Responsibility

Learners shall be responsible for noting correctly the times and places of their examinations. No special arrangements shall be made for the learner who fails to attend for examination at the proper time, if such failure is due to their mistake or inadvertence and not to illness or other serious and unavoidable cause.

- 20.2 Learners should be present at the examination room at least fifteen minutes before the start of the examination to enable them to take their allocated seats.
- 20.3 Learners will be reminded by the Chief Invigilator to ensure that there is no unauthorised material in their possession. The Chief Invigilator/Invigilators will regard any other material or item on a learner's desk, chair or person as unauthorised materials in his/her possession. Possession of unauthorized materials including mobile phones in an examination is an offence.
- 20.4 Programmable calculators are not allowed unless authorised. If the use of pocket calculators in an examination is authorised, such calculators shall be checked by the invigilator and shall be silent.

20.5 Prior Arrangements by Management

The following shall be ensured before the examinations:

20.5.1 A copy of the Regulations for the Conduct of Examinations is available on the website of OU;

20.5.2 To sensitise learners on examination irregularities and their implications;

20.5.3 Inform learners about the penalties if found guilty of breaching examination regulations.

The attention of learners should be drawn to the range of penalties which may be imposed when their examination timetable and index number are sent;

20.5.4 The Regulations for the Conduct of Examinations to be displayed in examination areas for notification;

20.5.5 Prior to the examination, it is recommended that the attendants check the toilet facilities to ensure that written materials are not hidden there.

20.6 It shall be the responsibility of the Director of Academic Affairs Division to ensure that the Programme Manager/a member of academic staff is instructed to be in attendance at the examination centre throughout the examination in order to deal with queries. Paper Setters external to OU, shall leave a telephone number on which he/she may be contacted subsequently should the need arise. It is the responsibility of the examiner to know the date and time of the examination.

20.6.1 Failure on the part of the representative of the Academic Affairs Division to attend the examination shall constitute an offence to be reported by the Chief Invigilator/ Invigilator to the Registrar through the Director of Academic Affairs Division.

20.7 Conduct of Examinations

20.7.1 Learners shall produce their identity cards at any time if required to do so by an invigilator. Failure to comply may entail disciplinary action. The Chief Invigilator/Invigilators will let learners into the examination room fifteen minutes before the examination starting time. Learners must go directly to the pre-allocated seat and put their identity card on their desk.

20.7.2 Once all learners are seated, they will be given their examination question paper.
They must make sure they get the correct question paper.

20.7.3 Misreading and/or claiming ignorance of an examination date, time or centre will not be accepted as an excuse for absence from an examination or for late arrival at the examination.

20.7.4 A learner who arrives at an examination room up to half an hour after the

examination has begun shall be admitted provided no other learner for the same examination has already left the room. If another learner for the same examination has already left the room, the latecomer shall not be admitted. If a learner arrives after half an hour the Chief Invigilator will admit the learner “under protest”. If another learner for the same examination has already left the room, the latecomer shall not be admitted. A learner whose name does not appear on the register may be admitted under protest provided that sufficient examination papers and places are available.

- 20.7.5 The Chief Invigilator/Invigilator shall immediately report the circumstance of any admission of a latecomer to the Registrar through the Director of Academic Affairs Division.
- 20.7.6 A learner who is admitted to an examination after the official starting time shall not be granted any additional time in which to complete the examination;
- 20.7.7 Except in an emergency, a learner may not leave the examination room until half an hour after the official starting time of the examination. No learner will be allowed to enter or to leave the examination room during the last ten minutes.
- 20.7.8 No book or paper of any kind may be taken into the examination room unless it has been duly authorised by the examiners for use in the examination room. Unauthorised materials or information must not be introduced into the examination room by any means whatsoever. Possession of unauthorised materials during an examination is an offence. Please see Appendix 8 for disciplinary procedures.
- 20.7.9 A non-exhaustive list of materials not allowed in the examination room is as follows: pencil case, cellular phones, calculators and any other electronic devices having written information. All evidences collected during examination may be retained by the University until no longer required.
- 20.7.10 Answers to questions must be written legibly in ink, except when there are other instructions.
- 20.7.11 Neither food nor drink is allowed in the examination room.
- 20.7.12 Singing, praying aloud or any activity that disturbs other learners is strictly forbidden.
- 20.7.13 Learners must not communicate with anyone except with an invigilator during the examination. Communication between learners is strictly forbidden during examination. Any learner found to be receiving or giving assistance would be severely sanctioned. In case there is any query, the learner must raise his/her hand and talk to the Chief Invigilator/Invigilator
- 20.7.14 If a learner needs to leave to use the toilet, he/she must raise his/her hand and remain seated until an invigilator comes to him/her. The invigilator will accompany him/her and will select which cubicle he/she can use.
- 20.7.15 The Chief Invigilator/Invigilator gives a warning ten minutes before the end of the examination. Then they will give instructions to stop writing. Learners cannot leave until all scripts have been collected. Learners must

stay in their seats until all papers are collected. Only then will the Chief Invigilator/Invigilator allow learners to leave in complete silence. Learners are not allowed to use their mobile phone when they are still inside the examination room.

- 20.7.16 Learners must not remove any answer book or supplementary sheet (used or unused) or examination paper (if applicable) from the examination room. A learner in possession of any answer book or supplementary sheet shall be liable to severe disciplinary action.

20.8 Missed Examinations

If a learner misses an examination for which he/she is registered, he/she will need to notify the Programme Manager in writing and provide justifiable reason for the absence. He/she may thereafter be given another opportunity either at the earliest possible time or at a subsequent semester. The learner's request may need to be supported by documentary evidence such as a medical certificate and must be received at OU Registry not later than one week after the examination date. No justifiable excuse would be accepted for missing an examination due to a misreading of the examination timetable.

20.9. Examinations for physically Challenged Learners

Special arrangements will be made by the Head of the Examination Unit for those learners with ill- health or physical challenges (certified by a registered medical practitioner or any other relevant authorities) who have requested and have been granted extra time and/or special facilities for an examination. If a learner is ill or has a physical challenge for which he/she requires special arrangement to be made for him/ her, he/she should submit a written request to the Registrar when he/she registers for the course or not later than four weeks before the start of the examinations period.

20.10 Absence from Examination

- 20.10.1 If a learner is absent from an examination without compelling reasons, he/she shall be deemed ungraded.
- 20.10.2 Absence due to illness supported by a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner should be immediately notified, in writing, to the Registrar by the learner concerned and supported by a medical certificate emanating from a registered medical practitioner. The medical certificate should be received by the Registrar's office within 3 working days from the date of the examination.
- 20.10.3 A learner who falls ill during an examination and subsequently presents an acceptable medical certificate may, on the recommendation of the Director of Academic Affairs Division be allowed by the Academic Council to take a special paper [This has to be agreed upon with the learner].
- 20.10.4 A learner who has completed the scheme of study but has been prevented from taking the whole or some part of an examination may take a special examination on the recommendation of the Director of Academic Affairs Division provided:
- the learner has presented evidence of illness supported by a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner or

- other cause accepted by the Director of Academic Affairs Division as constituting sufficient reason for being absent from the examination.

20.11 Examination Irregularities

- (a) The attention of learners is drawn to the following non-exhaustive list of examination irregularities:
 - (i) Possession of any unauthorised material in any form is an offence. The Chief Invigilator/Invigilator will make a written statement of facts which has to be signed by both parties. If the learner refuses to sign, the other Invigilator signs as witness;
 - (ii) Communication with other learners;
 - (iii) Exchanging paper or any material between learners;
 - (iv) Giving assistance to or receiving assistance from other learners; and
 - (v) Where a learner is caught cheating, in the opinion of the Chief Invigilator/ Invigilator, the latter will make a written statement of facts that has to be signed by both parties. If the learner refuses to sign, the other Invigilator signs as witness.
- (b) Where the Chief Invigilator/Invigilator notices or is made to notice any case of examination irregularity, he/she shall immediately report the facts, in writing, through the Director of Academic Affairs Division to the Registrar who shall refer the matter to the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee of the Academic Council.
- (c) The learner in question shall be notified by the Registrar, in writing, of the charges against him/her. Please see Disciplinary Procedure at **Appendix 8**.
- (d) Pending the decision of the Disciplinary Committee, the learner will be allowed to write any remaining University examinations. The decision to assess or not to assess the learner's scripts shall be taken in the light of the findings of the Disciplinary Committee.
- (e) Cases of examination irregularity being probed by the Disciplinary Committee shall be notified by the Registrar to the Chairperson of the Board of Examiners concerned so that the marks/results of the learner(s) involved are not processed until notified by the Academic Council.
- (f) A learner can appeal to the Academic Council through the Registrar against a decision of the Disciplinary Committee as per Disciplinary Procedure at **Appendix 8**.

20.12 Publication of Results

- 20.12.1 Official notification of the University final examination results as approved by the Academic Council shall be sent to each learner by the Head of the Examination Unit.
- 20.12.2 Official final semester/examination results as approved by the Academic Council on the notice boards and the University's website. Provisional results can be released after approval by the Board of Examiners.

21.0 REGULATIONS FOR ACADEMIC APPEALS

Learners may appeal any decision based upon institutional procedure or policy provided that the policy allows for an appeal, through the Office of the Registrar. For Regulations regarding Academic Appeals see **Appendix 9**.

22.0 COMPLIANCE

Employees (full time and contractual) and OU learners are required to comply with all applicable laws, regulations, code of ethics/code of conduct. The standards of conduct below are non-exhaustive. It is the responsibility of each employee/learner to act honestly and with integrity in all dealings and to seek appropriate guidance when necessary.

22.1 **Learner Conduct Regulations, discipline and disciplinary procedures as per Appendix 8.**

The Learner Conduct Regulations are intended to set and maintain acceptable standards of behaviour within the University community. The learners shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner conducive to the furtherance of the objects of the University and to the maintenance of its efficiency and well-being as an academic community.

22.2 The following shall be held to be a breach of University discipline rendering a learner liable to disciplinary action under the code of discipline governed by the relevant laws, regulations, code of ethics/code of conduct:

- (a) Breaches of Criminal Law. These will invariably be reported to the police but this in no way prejudices the right of the University to institute its own disciplinary proceedings whatever outcome of the reference to the police.
- (b) Conduct/behaviour that obstructs or interferes with teaching and research and the administration of the University.
- (c) Conduct/behaviour that obstructs any member of the University or part time staff/tutors from discharging their lawful duties.
- (d) Conduct prejudicial to the University's relations with the general public and/or its partner institutions, for example, by conveying erroneous information to the press/media, which may be construed as an exertion of undue pressure on or as a threat to the University Authorities.
- (e) Failure to comply with any rules made to maintain the good order and efficiency of the University, for example, rules relating to the use of University facilities, security and damage to University property.
- (f) Improper and indecent language and unbecoming behaviour, including harassment.

23.0 STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

No learner may make statements to the press, radio or television, any other social and communication network on behalf of the University without the prior written permission of the Director-General.

24.0 ATTENDANCE POLICY

Due to the nature of open flexible distance learning, attendance at tutorial sessions is not compulsory. However, the Open University encourages learners to attend the tutorials as this will give them the opportunity for live interactions with the tutors and peers towards richer learning experiences. The Open University considers learning through interactions as the learners' progression through the required learning materials. New learners are given a timeline outlining the weekly progression that is expected of them. This progression is achievable provided an average of 15-20 hours per week is dedicated to study, projects, assignments, and/or taking online tests depending upon the programme. Learners following courses on full-time mode must attend at least 70% of the lectures.

25.0 LOSS AND DAMAGE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

The University shall not be liable for any loss or damage to a learner's property left on the University premises.

26.0 CONFERMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS AS PER APPENDIX 10

- 26.1 A learner may be considered for the award of a degree after accumulating credits to the total required in accordance with these Regulations.
- 26.2 The University reserves the right to set a limit, expressed in terms of minimum and maximum number of years, after which credits awarded for completion of a course may not be counted against a degree unless the learner re-register against payment of relevant fees. This shall not apply in case of sudden illness supported by a Medical Certificate or other emergency occurring after the expiry of the normal time.
- 26.3 The date on which a degree is conferred shall be the date of its award by the Academic Council.
- 26.4 Degrees and other qualifications awarded by the University will be conferred at the Congregation held at such time and place and in such manner as the Academic Council may from time to time determine.
- 26.5 Learners who wish to receive their award in absentia shall inform the Registrar in writing of their intention at least seven days before the convocation at which the degree is to be conferred. In other exceptional cases, for example if the learners cannot attend on the day of convocation for any other reasons, his/her ward can receive the award in the name of the learner.
- 26.6 Learners who at the completion of their studies have not returned the library books or materials loaned to them shall not be admitted (except with the prior permission of the Director-General) to the conferment of a degree, diploma, certificate or any other qualification of OU until they fulfill all their obligations to the University.
- 26.7 The University shall not confer any degree on a person in debt to the University. Certificates of graduands will be withheld as long as the graduands have not cleared all their liabilities towards the University.

27.0 LOSS OF CERTIFICATES

In case of loss of the original certificate, the University may issue a copy on the following conditions:

- (a) The holder of the original certificate must produce a sworn affidavit.
- (b) The copy issued will have 'copy' marked across it.
- (c) A copy will be issued against a prescribed fee.

28.0 SETTING UP THE COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING UNIT

28.1 The functions of OU Office of Compliance, under the direction of a Head of Compliance, are described in **Appendix 11**.

28.2 Complaints Resolution Policy

Learners who have any complaint with respect to any matter pertaining to OU can air their complaints by either talking directly with their Programme Manager or writing a letter stating the nature of the complaint and a possible resolution. The letter must be signed, dated, and submitted to the Registrar.

28.3 Complaints received as outlined above will be acted upon immediately and the resolution reported back to the learner within 7 working days. Records of all written complaints and written resolutions to such complaints will be kept in the relevant file. See **Appendix 12**.

29.0 REGULATIONS ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

29.1 Upon registration of a learner, it is a condition that the latter agrees to transfer or assign to the University the Intellectual Property Rights to which these Regulations apply.

These Regulations apply to

- (a) the ownership of and the sole right to exploit any patentable invention or discovery;
- (b) all rights in any design produced and
- (c) copyright in any computer program and any design capable of commercial exploitation produced by the learner in the programme of study or research.

29.2 Where the whole of a learner's programme of study or research is funded by himself or herself, or by a publicly funded body, or by anybody other than one who has entered into a contract for a specific piece of research with the University, the assignment shall only apply to those items of intellectual property referred to in paragraph 29.1.b above.

29.3 Where a learner is fully funded for a programme of study or research or makes use of facilities provided by a third party under a contract made with the University, the assignment shall apply to the items of intellectual property referred to in paragraph 29.1.b above and also to copyright in any work (including any report, essay, dissertation and thesis) produced by the learner during or as a result of that programme or part programme.

- 29.4 Where the whole or part of a learner's programme of study or research is funded fully or partially, or makes use of facilities provided by a third party, under a contract made with the University, the following provisions shall apply:
- (a) The University may in its own name or as agent for the learner transfer or assign to the third party, rights to which these regulations apply on such terms as it may think fit;
 - (b) The learner shall, in accordance with any relevant terms of agreement between the University and the third party, keep confidential all information relating to the work or business of the third party, acquired by the learner during that programme, or part programme, of study and neither use for the learner's own benefit nor, save with the consent of the third party, disclose to any other person such information.
- 29.5 Where rights are vested in the University in pursuance of these Regulations, the University may exploit those rights, using its best endeavours to that end and granting to the learner such reasonable share in any benefit accruing to the University as shall be agreed from time to time by the University. If the University does not wish to exploit rights vested in it, it may at the request of the learner, return the rights to the learner.
- 29.6 A learner shall not without the consent of the University publish any work which might prejudice the exploitation of the rights to which these Regulations apply by the University or any third party to which rights have been transferred or assigned.
- 29.7 These regulations shall not apply to the case where a learner has assigned his/her intellectual property to his/her employer under a contract of employment and where the learner has retained that employment during his/her period of registration at the University. In such cases the University shall enter into negotiations with the employer to ensure that the interests of the University are protected.
- 29.8 The learner shall treat as confidential all knowledge and information (including knowledge and information relating to the materials, processes, machinery and apparatus used in experiments and trials) relating to any work taking place within the University when clear instructions for confidentiality have already been given by the Supervisor.
- 29.9 The University shall be responsible for the legal protection of the rights where the University holds any interest in such rights.
- 29.10 Any other cases relating to Intellectual Property Rights will be referred to the Academic Council for consideration/advice.

30.0 REGULATIONS ON ANTI-PLAGIARISM

- 30.1 These regulations apply to all work carried out by learners in connection with their programme of study.
- 30.2 The University considers plagiarism as an act of intellectual and academic dishonesty and shall under no circumstance accept or tolerate any case of plagiarism.
- 30.3 When a learner represents or intends to represent the work carried out by another person as his own work, whether intentionally or by inadvertence he/she is guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism is the act of taking another person's writing, conversation, artwork or even idea and passing it off as your own. This includes information from web pages, books, songs, television shows, email messages, interviews, articles or any other medium.
- 30.4 The University reserves the right to use, or not to use, any appropriate tools, software and techniques for determining the extent of plagiarism on any work submitted by a learner and whether they are within acceptable limits.
- 30.5 The University reserves the right to refer any learner suspected of committing plagiarism to the relevant disciplinary Committees for taking appropriate actions against him/her.
- 30.6 It is the responsibility of the learner, and only the learner, to ascertain that all work which is not of his/her own, whether partly or in full, is properly acknowledged and referenced in the work submitted.
- 30.7 Appropriate advice shall be provided to the learners by the respective Programme Managers concerned to help them better understand plagiarism and its consequences. Learners should avail themselves of these services.
- 30.8 Any other case regarding plagiarism will be referred to the Academic Council for consideration/ advice.

31.0 REGULATION FOR THE DEGREES OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY(MPhil) AND DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)

31.1 Introduction

The purpose of these regulations, and any related policies, guidelines and procedures established by the Open University of Mauritius, is to assure and enhance the quality of education and training of doctoral students, and to create a framework that guides and supports the students and their supervisors.

MPhil, MPhil/PhD and PhD are qualifications that can be obtained as a result of successful research work within a wide range of subjects. These programmes give an opportunity to students to make a significant contribution to knowledge. The MPhil degree is awarded to those having demonstrated the capacity to pursue original research and scholarship after having completed a substantial amount of supervised research based on a thorough literature review and sound research methodology. The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is

conferred in recognition of the student's contribution of an original piece of research revealing high critical ability and powers of imagination and synthesis. The PhD allows students to think independently and critically so that they can pursue research without any supervision. In order to deal with the vast amount of literature available, students have to follow a few courses together with their research-based thesis.

31.2 Aims

The MPhil/PhD and PhD courses aim at

- (a) empowering students so that they can significantly add to an existing body of knowledge;
- (b) providing a thorough grounding in research methodology, methods and techniques;
- (c) development of vital skills including critical thinking, conducting research independently, writing, synthesising, and analysing, that are necessary to produce an original research-based thesis;
- (d) empowering students to prepare a substantial and original thesis emanating from an in-depth investigation and analysis; and
- (e) empowering students to review current research critically, and understand emerging trends from an inter-disciplinary perspective.

31.2.1 Learning Outcomes

MPhil graduates should be able to

- develop systematic understanding of knowledge and a critical mind on identifying problems or new insights in a particular field;
- demonstrate a comprehensive and an advanced understanding of techniques for research, and develop research skills and methods applicable to a particular field;
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level;
- transfer their analytical skills to non-academic jobs; and
- pursue PhD studies

Measurements of learning outcomes:

Academic Development

- Students' ability to publish (measured by the quality of their research output);
- Ability to receive prizes and awards (measured by the quality of the prizes); and
- Ability to pursue studies in PhD.

Non-Academic Development

- Ability to progress in a non-academic career with their professional knowledge.

PhD graduates should be able to

- demonstrate a systematic understanding of advanced knowledge which is at the forefront of a particular field;
- demonstrate a thorough understanding of research methodologies and techniques of an advanced level;
- design and implement a research project independently which is original and pioneering in a discipline, the quality of which is up to the standard of peer review;
- have knowledge on how to write an effective application for research grant;
- have knowledge on the requirements and strategy to publish in top academic journals of a specific field; and
- transfer their analytical skills to non-academic jobs.

Measurements of learning outcomes:

Academic Development

- Students' ability to publish (measured by the quality of their research output);
- Ability to receive prizes and awards (measured by the quality of the prizes); and
- Ability to progress in an academic career.

Non-Academic Development

- Ability to progress in a non-academic career with their professional knowledge.

31.3 Admission

An applicant holding a masters-level degree in the related area may be admitted to a course of study and research leading to the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Applicants with undergraduate degrees (at least Second Class-First Division or equivalent from a recognised university) may be considered but they would only be allowed to register for an MPhil/PhD degree. The students can subsequently transfer their registration to the PhD through a formal application.

An applicant may not be admitted to a programme of study and research leading to the Degree of MPhil or PhD unless the applicant has first been accepted by the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division. At the time of the application, the applicant must submit a synopsis stating clearly the field in which he or she wishes to pursue the research study. In general, admissions would be based on qualifications and suitability of the applicant; availability of supervisors, resources and facilities; evidence of language proficiency; and appropriateness of the synopsis. The admission of an applicant may be subject to conditions specified by the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division.

31.4 Registration

A student for the Degree of MPhil or PhD must register at the start of the programme of study and shall undertake to comply with the OU Act, Statutes, Rules and Regulations and Charter.

Registration shall normally be effective from 1 January or 1 July in any year according to the quarter in which the programme of study and research is started. Unless specified otherwise, the confirmation of the registration will normally take place twelve months after initial registration, and approval of the research proposal by the OU Research Degrees Committee.

A student must re-enroll by the beginning of each year the programme of study is pursued. The registration of a student who fails to re-enroll may be deemed to have lapsed. No student is entitled to register or re-enroll unless the prescribed annual fees for the year have been paid.

31.5 Mode of Study

- (i) on a full-time or part-time basis at the University
- (ii) on a full-time or part-time basis and/or in collaboration with the industry, a research establishment or other institution having suitable facilities for carrying out research.

Course Stage

Year 1- Semester I

In the first semester of the first year, students have to compulsorily follow the two modules:

(1) OUDP001111: Research Issues

This course gives students a basic understanding of what research is and how it is done. It also introduces some of the key issues associated with doctoral research and writing. Attention is given to the nature of the research process, including the steps to be followed in planning and designing a research project and this leads to the consideration of the philosophy of research and the means by which researchers identify issues and acquire knowledge.

The topics covered include: the concept of research; philosophy of research in business and management; demonstrating understanding of philosophical assumptions and different underpinning research approaches and strategies; understanding the specifics of management and business research; choosing a research topic and research focus; evaluating topic feasibility; research process; qualitative and quantitative research; overview of research methods; application to business research; writing a research proposal; ethics in research; and developing a research timetable.

This module will be assessed through a research proposal of 3,000 words.

(2) OUDP001112: Systematic Literature Review

The course allows students to understand the methods to conduct literature review systematically. Students will learn how to describe and critically analyse the work of other people. Students also undertake a programme of directed, in-depth reading to an advanced level in the field of research in which they wish to specialise for their dissertation.

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to demonstrate a detailed and critical understanding of the field of research to be studied and the interrelationship of the topic areas within the field; they should be able to thoroughly analyse and evaluate a range of critical and controversial issues drawn from the literature of the field of research as well as critically discuss the key debates within the chosen field of research. Students are also expected to develop the research problem with reference to relevant ideas in their discipline while synthesizing ideas at a high level of understanding; this would allow them to start creating new knowledge through the development of a relevant conceptual framework.

The topics covered include: the concept of a literature review; analysis and synthesis of academic literature; theory development; sources of information and search techniques; the structure and format of a business literature review.

This element will require a written submission of 5000 words.

Each module carries 100 marks and will be assessed as follows (unless otherwise specified): assessment will be based on continuous assessment and a final report. Continuous assessment will be based on assignment(s), portfolios or mini-projects. For a learner to pass a module, an overall total of 40% for combined continuous assessment and final written submission components would be required without minimum thresholds within the individual continuous assessment and final submissions. Learners who fail a module will have to re-submit the assessment tasks within a month from the date of the notification of the failure; if learners fail again, then learners will have to re-sit the module. Learners may re-sit up to a maximum of two failed modules for the semester of the programme. They must clear both modules before proceeding to the research stage.

Grading

Percentage Range	Description	Grade	Grade Point
70.0% and above	Excellent	A	5
60.0% ≤ x < 70.0%	Very Good	B	4
50.0% ≤ x < 60.0%	Good	C	3
40.0% ≤ x < 50.0%	Satisfactory	D	2
00.0% ≤ x < 40.0%	Ungraded	F	0

Students following the PhD programme may follow these courses:

(1) OUIDB001113: Quantitative Methods for Business

This course gives an opportunity to the students to understand the various quantitative techniques.

The topics covered include: descriptive statistics; probability and basic mathematical statistics; sampling; confidence intervals; hypothesis testing; ANOVA; Multiple Regression analysis; Categorical data analysis; Non-parametric statistics; Logistic Regression Discriminant analysis; Cluster analysis; and Factor analysis

(2) OUIDB001121: Research Methods I: Quantitative Research Methods for Business

This course gives an opportunity to the students to understand the various quantitative research methods.

The topics covered include: quantitative data production techniques and collection; quantitative data analysis; questionnaire design; reliability and validity issues; and generalisations.

(3) OUIDB001122: Research Methods II: Qualitative Research Methods for Business

This course gives an opportunity to the students to understand the various quantitative research methods.

In this course, students explore qualitative research approaches such as Grounded theory, case- based research, action research and the use of software like N-Vivo.

Students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.

Supervised Stage

Year 1: Semester II

Students will be allocated a supervisor. After exploring the key issues and critically reflecting on relevant aspects of practice and their relationship with theory, students must finalise the topic of the thesis. They must assess the appropriateness of research paradigms; finalise the research framework that will guide their investigation; develop a thorough knowledge of the paradigms and methodologies by which knowledge in the field of their enquiry has been advanced and develop as well as robustly defend their chosen research approach. Thus, they must critically examine the use of different research methodologies employed by researchers in the chosen field of research. They must demonstrate a detailed and critical understanding of research activity and issues within the field of research and the interrelationship of research results among the topic areas as well as a thorough understanding of the research problems in the particular area chosen for the thesis. They must master the techniques and methodologies that are likely to be productive in addressing the chosen research problem.

The research proposal must be submitted to the OU Research Degrees Committee for review and approval.

OUDP001121: PhD Thesis

The thesis is then submitted formally to the University. Assessment takes the form of a review followed by an oral 'defence' of the thesis, usually referred to as the 'viva voce' which is Latin for 'with the living voice'. The examination is conducted in person or by live video link at the University's discretion. The PhD degree is awarded to successful students. Students are encouraged to publish articles in research journals.

A student shall indicate by means of explicit references the citation of the work of others or work by the student which is not part of the submission for the Degree. Work submitted for another Degree may not comprise part of the submission for the Degree of Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy.

A student shall inform the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, neither earlier than six months nor later than two months before the thesis is presented; the proposed title of the thesis, which must be clearly stated neither earlier than six months nor later than two months before the thesis is presented. The title of the thesis must be approved by the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division. No change whatsoever in the approved title may be made except with the consent of the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division.

At the completion of the programme of study or research, a candidate for the degree shall evidence their acquisition of these skills by means of a programme of study and research for the degree of PhD must include all of the following:

- (i) Original research leading to a contribution to new knowledge;
- (ii) Sufficient study in discipline-specific matters so as to permit a graduate to contribute at the forefront of the relevant profession or research; and
- (iii) Training in elements that allow the student to develop transferable and generic skills.

At the completion of the programme of study or research, a candidate for the degree shall evidence their acquisition of these skills by means of:

(i) Presentation of a thesis that:

(a) For the Degree of Master of Philosophy should embody the results of a well designed research programme or consist of an ordered and critical exposition of existing knowledge in a well-defined field;

(b) For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy should form a distinct contribution to the current knowledge of the subject. The thesis should also show evidence of a systematic study of the subject, originality shown by the exercise of independent critical power, and should be worthy of publication in complete or abridged form.

(ii) Successful defence of thesis or portfolio at the viva voce examination. The purpose of such an examination shall be to establish that the:

(a) Work presented arises from the candidate's own efforts;

(b) Candidate has an awareness of his/her broader subject discipline beyond the confines of the thesis – his/her knowledge being typical of a competent researcher in the discipline; and

(c) Candidate is capable of exercising independent critical analysis of data presented.

For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, the examination shall in addition seek to establish that:

(a) the candidate has developed the ability to formulate investigations into appropriate questions for study

(b) the candidate is capable of designing a programme of systematic study appropriate to address questions identified as in (a) above.

31.6 Minimum Period of Study for MPhil

The minimum period of full-time study and research shall be eighteen months for a student registered for the Degree of Master of Philosophy and thirty months for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The latter period may be reduced by the OU Research Degrees Committee to twenty- four months, on the recommendation of the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division.

The minimum period of part-time study and research shall be twenty-four months for students for the Degree of Master of Philosophy and thirty-six months for students for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

31.7 Maximum Period of Study for MPhil

The maximum period of study and research for a student who has pursued, on a full-time basis, shall be thirty-six months for the Degree of Master of Philosophy and sixty months for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The maximum period for a part-time student shall be seventy-two months for the Degree of Master of Philosophy and ninety-six months for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

31.8 Extension of Time

A student may apply for an extension of the maximum period of study and research by writing to the Director-General of the OU having first obtained the approval of the principal supervisor and Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division (or authorised signatory). Such an application shall be considered by the OU Research Degrees Committee after seeking

the opinion of the student's supervisor(s) and Dean of Faculty if necessary. The OU Research Degrees Committee may extend the maximum period of study and research by not more than twelve months at any one time. The registration of a student for whom the maximum period of registration has ended, and for whom no further extension has been granted, shall be deemed to have lapsed and will be terminated.

A student pursuing a programme of study and research on a full-time basis may not simultaneously register for another award of the University, or any other University, except that:

- (i) if a student has completed a programme of study for another award but the award has not been made, the student may register provisionally for a period not exceeding three months;
- (ii) exceptionally and subject to approval by the OU Research Degrees Committee, a student registered at two institutions (the OU and a collaborative partner) may submit his or her thesis for examination at both institutions. Satisfactory performance at each institution would result in a joint/dual award for the thesis.

31.9 Transfer from another Institution

The OU Research Degrees Committee may permit a student who has started a programme of study and research at another institution to complete it as a registered student of the Open University of Mauritius. The Research Degrees Committee shall specify the minimum and maximum periods of study and research in each case.

31.10 Temporary Withdrawal and Suspension of Registration

A programme of study and research shall be continuously pursued except that the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division may approve temporary suspension of registration for a period not exceeding a total of twelve months, provided the student has not already reached the period of maximum registration and has demonstrated good cause for such a suspension. The Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division shall report any such period of approved temporary suspension of registration to the Director-General/Registrar. In such cases, the student's maximum period of registration shall be extended by the same amount of time.

The OU Research Degrees Committee may, on the recommendation of the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, approve a further period of temporary suspension of registration beyond that already approved by a Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, if the student has not yet reached the end of the maximum period of registration. The OU Research Degrees Committee may, on the recommendation of the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, approve a period of temporary suspension of registration beyond the maximum period of registration. In either case, the period of temporary suspension of registration shall not exceed twelve months at any one time and shall extend the student's maximum period of registration by the same amount of time.

Temporary suspension of registration shall not normally be permitted in the case of a student registered on a continuing basis but the OU Research Degrees Committee may grant permission in exceptional circumstances.

31.11 Transfer between Modes of Study

A student may be permitted by the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division to transfer between full-time, part-time and collaborative registration. The Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division shall inform the Director-General/Registrar of any such transfers. The minimum and maximum periods of registration shall be determined in each case according to the periods in which the student was registered under each mode.

31.12 Supervision

The Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division shall appoint one or more supervisors for each student.

As supervision of doctoral students - a key factor determining the successful and timely completion of a PhD - remains a complex multi-factorial process, and an original research project rarely follows an easily predictable path, every learner is assigned two supervisors as from the second semester. The Principal Supervisor, who is an expert in the field in which the learner wishes to conduct the doctoral study, must possess a PhD. The Second Supervisor provides all necessary administrative support as well as guidance in the field of research methodology and data analysis. The Second Supervisor is an internal staff holding a PhD with experience in supervision of doctoral projects who must monitor and evaluate the research progress at regular intervals. The internal supervisor acts as the 'PhD student counsellor'. The Second (internal) Supervisor will also ensure that there is proper communication between the Principal Supervisor and student, and intervenes in case of conflict between the supervisor and the student. As the combination of time pressure with high academic ambitions can be burdensome, OU also provides additional support to learners to cope with the stress. Through regular meeting of learners from all disciplines, OU endeavors to maintain a positive social environment at the doctoral programme level as it is considered to be vital for the quality of a PhD programme. Open University of Mauritius, which does not have a policy on the number of learners being supervised by a supervisor, ensures that there is high quality of supervision as the student-supervisor relationship has the potential to be wonderfully enriching and productive, but it can also be extremely difficult and personally devastating.

31.13 Reports to Supervisor

A student shall report on the progress of the research to the supervisor(s) in such manner and at such intervals as the supervisors may determine but at least once every six months.

A formal written annual report shall be made to the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division on the anniversary of the student's initial registration. The report shall comprise a section written by the student and a section written by the principal supervisor. The Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division shall supply to the OU Research Degrees Committee on a quarterly basis a complete list of postgraduate research students, indicating any for whom an annual progress review has not been completed and the reasons why.

An unsatisfactory outcome at an annual review will result in the initiation of unsatisfactory academic progress procedures unless a request for recognition of extenuating circumstances is found to be valid by an extenuating circumstances panel.

Refusal by a student to submit a written annual report may be considered as a reasonable ground for termination of studies by the OU Research Degrees Committee.

The supervisor(s) may require a student to follow a programme of lectures, seminars, colloquia or equivalent educational activities as part of the programme of study and research.

31.14 Unsatisfactory Academics Progress

A student's registration may be terminated on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic progress. If the Supervisors judge a student's progress to be unsatisfactory they must inform the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division. The details of this consultation will be documented and both parties must be in agreement that the student's progress is unsatisfactory. If there is a disagreement between the parties then the case will be referred to the OU Research Degrees Committee for a decision.

The student will be sent written notification that his/her progress has been deemed unsatisfactory and offered the opportunity to remedy this. The student will be offered at least three months to meet specified targets.

Following the specified period, the student's case will be reviewed by the Supervisors, and one other member of the Open University not previously involved in the case but with knowledge of field of research. If all parties agree that the student has failed to meet the targets to the required standard, then a recommendation for programme termination will be made to the OU Research Degrees Committee. If there is a disagreement between the parties, then the case will be referred to the OU Research Degrees Committee for a decision.

Where a student makes a request for the recognition of extenuating circumstances during or after the specified period, this will be considered by the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division. Where extenuating circumstances are found to be valid, the deadline will normally be extended by up to three months subject to the approval of the OU Research Degrees Committee.

A student retains the right to permanently withdraw from a programme of study.

In cases where the student appears to have withdrawn from the programme of study and failed to make contact with the Faculty, it will be sufficient for a recommendation of termination to be made to the OU Research Degrees Committee solely on the basis of evidence showing that reasonable efforts have been made to contact the student at the last email and postal address provided and warning the student of the consequences of not contacting the University within at most 10 working days.

31.15 Format of Thesis

The thesis shall be temporarily bound before it is examined. One copy per examiner shall be submitted to the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division for distribution and, if required, a copy shall be submitted for use by the supervisor. Where appropriate, a copy of the thesis may also be required by a collaborating organisation.

The thesis shall be typed on A4 sized paper. All pages should be numbered. The title page shall bear the approved title, and student's name, the Degree for which the student is registered and the year in which the thesis is presented. A summary of the work, not exceeding 300 words in length and a signed Statement of Originality must be included in each copy following the title page. Whenever possible, subsidiary papers and other material should form part of the thesis, but a student is at liberty to submit such material separately for consideration by the examiners.

The thesis shall be written in English except when the OU Research Degrees Committee has given permission for another language to be used owing to the nature of the subject. The summary should always be written in English.

Following recommendation by the examiners that an award be made, at least one copy of the thesis, and any additional copies as deemed necessary, shall be submitted to the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division. One copy of the thesis of a successful student will be retained in the University Library and the others by the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division and, where appropriate, by the collaborating organisation concerned. A student is advised to keep an additional copy for personal use.

The thesis shall be permanently bound. The binding shall be in blue cloth and hard-backed. The Degree, the year, and the student's name shall appear on the spine. A digital copy of the final thesis shall also be submitted. No alterations or additions may be made to a thesis after it has been submitted except with the agreement of the examiners.

The Harvard Referencing System must be used.

31.16 Examination

The examination shall be conducted by at least two examiners, at least one of whom must be external to the University.

Normally, there should be one internal and one external examiner. In case, an internal examiner is not available, two external examiners will be selected.

The internal examiner will have the dual role of examining and chairing the viva voce (where applicable) examination unless an independent chair is appointed. Viva voce shall be conducted when there is a major discrepancy in the recommendations of the examiners of the thesis. The examiners must have expertise in examining at the appropriate level so that they are familiar with the standards expected and the achievement likely to be attained. An external examiner must have experience of at least one relevant examination. Where an external examiner does not have the experience necessary, an additional external examiner shall be appointed who may not hold such specialist knowledge but who could supply the necessary examination experience. This does not remove the requirement for an experienced internal examiner unless an independent chair has also been appointed and the arrangements are approved by the Research Degrees Committee.

An external examiner shall not have held any appointment of the University, other than that of external examiner, during the period in which the student had been registered for the Degree, nor had any supervisory relationship with the student. The examiners shall be appointed by the OU on the recommendation of the OU Research Degrees Committee. The examiners will not have had any prior formal involvement with the project or have acted as supervisor of the student.

Internal examiners shall normally have expertise in the area relevant to the student's field of research and be demonstrably research active, hold permanent appointments as Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader, Professor, University Director, Professorial or Senior Research Fellow with the Faculty (honorary or joint appointees and retired staff members may also be eligible for appointment).

Independent Chairs will be appointed by the Research Degrees Committee in the following circumstances:

- where a student is being re-assessed upon appeal;
- in cases where two external examiners are required including;
 - where the candidate is a member of the staff of the university;
 - where the University is unable to provide an internal examiner with the appropriate subject matter expertise and a second external examiner is appointed;
 - where two external examiners are required due to lack of examining experience of the preferred subject matter expert and the nominated internal examiner has no prior experience of chairing a viva;
 - in any other special case as determined by the OU Research Degrees Committee

The Chair will be appointed by the Research Degrees Committee on the recommendation of the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division. The Chair will not have had any prior formal involvement with the project or have acted as supervisor of the student.

Each examiner shall submit an independent report on the content and style of the thesis prior to the viva voce examination.

The viva voce examination, wherever applicable, should normally be held not less than thirty

days and not more than ninety days after submission of the thesis. Only with the approval of the OU Research Degrees Committee and with the written agreement of both the examiners and the

candidate, the viva voce examination may exceptionally be held after twenty days from the date of submission.

The viva voce examination shall be conducted in the presence of the examiners at the Réduit. Exceptionally, and subject to the approval of the OU Research Degrees Committee, the examination may be arranged at another venue, provided all parties, including the student, agree. The viva voce examination may take place via video-conference. The student's supervisor(s) may and would ordinarily expect to be present at the viva voce examination. The student may request in writing to the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division at the time of the thesis submission that the supervisor(s) be present or not be present at the viva voce examination. Reasons need not be given. If the supervisor(s) are present, they may only take part or comment at the invitation of the Chair. If the supervisor(s) are not present, the examiners may, in consultation with and through the Chair, seek answers to questions from the supervisor before, during or after the examination.

No persons other than the above shall be present at or otherwise take part in the viva voce examination, except that the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, or Head of Department at the behest of the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, if not an examiner or supervisor, may be present as an observer.

After the examination, the examiners shall report on the viva voce examination, together with any reports that may have been submitted by the supervisor(s) in response to a request by the examiners. They shall preferably present a joint report but are at liberty to present separate ones if they so wish. They shall jointly make one of the following recommendations, as appropriate:

- (i) that the Degree be awarded;
- (ii) that the Degree be awarded, subject to specified, minor corrections and/or additions being made to the thesis or portfolio to the satisfaction of the Internal Examiner within a period not exceeding six months;
- (iii) that the Degree not be awarded, but that the student be permitted to submit a revised thesis, by a specified date, normally twelve months, with or without further research, and be examined with or without a further viva voce examination [the examiners may, however, recommend (iv) or (v) as an alternative to (iii)];
- (iv) that for those students registered for the DBA, that Degree not be awarded but that the Degree of Master of Philosophy be awarded, if appropriate, after specified minor corrections and/or additions have been made to the thesis or portfolio, and if the student submits the thesis for that Degree within six months or as otherwise agreed by the OU Research Degrees Committee;
- (v) that for those students registered for the DBA, that Degree not be awarded but the student be permitted to submit a revised thesis, for the degree of Master of Philosophy, by a specified date, (normally twelve months), with or without further research, and be examined with or without a further viva voce examination;
- (vi) that the Degree not be awarded and with no recommendation

regarding a re-submission of the thesis (normally only applicable following a re-submission).

If specified minor corrections are required in a thesis or portfolio, the Registrar shall inform the student of the nature of the corrections, within twenty days of the viva, in the form of a written list. Any corrections required in a thesis shall be completed within six months of the viva voce examination unless the OU Research Degrees Committee allows a longer time. The thesis shall be permanently bound within the same time limit if it was not bound when submitted for the first time. The Registrar shall, within thirty days of completion by the student, certify that any specified, minor corrections have been carried out satisfactorily and included in the bound thesis. In the case of any re-submission, the student may be liable for additional composition and/or re-examination fees.

The recommendation of the examiners shall be considered by the Research Degrees Committee. If a recommendation that the Degree be not awarded is approved, the student's programme shall be terminated.

A student shall be informed in writing within twenty days after the viva of the reasons for the examiners' rejection of the original thesis, normally by being sent by the Director-General/Registrar (or nominee) a Statement of Requirements prepared by the examiners listing the principal aspects of the thesis which require improvement, a copy of which will be appended to the Examination Entry Form.

A student may submit a revised thesis once only, on the recommendation of the examiners and with the approval of the OU Research Degrees Committee. The Examiners shall determine the date by which the revised thesis shall be submitted, normally twelve months after the original viva voce. If the thesis is not submitted by the specified date, the student's registration may be deemed to have lapsed; the OU Research Degrees Committee may however, grant an extension of the time permitted.

The procedure for submitting a revised thesis shall be the same as that for submitting the original.

A revised thesis shall normally be examined by both original examiners but the OU Research Degrees Committee may appoint other examiners. The examiners may not recommend re-submission for a second time but may make one of the recommendations, as appropriate, in accordance with (i), (ii), (iv) or (vi) above and should do so within ninety days of receipt of the revised thesis.

If the examiners are unable to agree on a recommendation after the viva voce, the Research Degrees Committee shall appoint an additional external examiner to review the thesis and the original examiners' reports which will be anonymised. The additional examiner may require the student to undergo another viva voce examination. The OU Research Degrees Committee shall consider the reports of all examiners before reaching a decision.

Matters concerning the examination of a student are confidential to those taking part in the examination and appropriate officers of the University. The contents of the thesis are similarly confidential until the award has been approved by the Academic Council and the thesis is available for dissemination.

Dissemination of knowledge is one of the objects of the University. Copies of theses accepted for the Degree of Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy are placed in the University Library and are available for anyone to consult. A student is therefore advised to mark the thesis as copyright. It shall, however, be a condition of acceptance of a thesis that the University Librarian be empowered to reproduce the thesis by photocopy or otherwise and to lend copies to those institutions or persons who, in the Librarian's opinion, require them for academic purposes.

If it is considered that the thesis contains matter of a confidential nature, the author may instruct the Librarian to restrict access to a thesis for a period not exceeding five years.

Access to the thesis may be allowed during this period only with permission of person(s) specified by the student and/or sponsoring organisation or collaborating body. Similarly, if it is desired to seek a patent from matter in the thesis, the author may instruct the Librarian to restrict access for a period not exceeding one year. If it is desired to extend the restriction beyond the above periods, or restrict access on other grounds, application must be made by writing to the University Librarian.

While the copyright of the thesis belongs to the author, a student is required to assign to the University or its nominee any intellectual property rights (whether patentable or otherwise) that the student is considered to have acquired resulting directly or indirectly from study at the University in return for a fair proportion of any net receipts. A student may, however, be subject to a specific agreement with the student's sponsor concerning the assignment of intellectual property rights to the sponsor.

31.17 Award

The Degree shall be awarded to a successful student by the OU Research Degrees Committee. The date of the award shall be the date on which the Academic Council approves the award.

No student shall be entitled to the award of a Degree unless all fees for tuition and residence and any other sums due to the University have been paid, and the rightful property of the University returned.

The Degree shall be awarded to a successful student by the OU Research Degrees Committee. The date of the award shall be the date on which the OU Academic Council approves the award.

Degrees shall be formally conferred at a Congregation held for the purpose. The Director-General/Registrar shall publish the names of those who have been awarded Degrees.

After the formal conferment, each graduate shall be given a Degree Certificate. The Certificate shall either be handed to the graduate or sent through the registered post to the student's address as listed in the University records. A replacement Certificate can be issued only on receipt of a written request from the graduate and on payment of the appropriate fee.

31.18 The OU Research Degrees Committee

Terms of Reference of the OU Research Degrees Committee.

The OU Research Degrees Committee will be responsible to the Board of the OU through the Academic Council.

31.18.1 Purpose

The OU Research Degrees Committee oversees the management of research degrees. It aims at fostering the development of the postgraduate research community. The OU Research Degrees Committee has powers delegated to it from the Board and Academic Council to approve and administer research degree registrations, transfers from MPhil to PhD, examination arrangements, monitor student progress and make recommendations for the award of research degrees, in accordance with the university's Academic Regulations for Research Awards. It also has an oversight of the training of research students, along with a responsibility for monitoring the quality of supervision of research students and for enhancing the quality of such supervision, including mechanisms for achieving this.

31.18.1 Terms of Reference

- a. To approve, monitor and administer research degree registrations, transfers and examination arrangements and make recommendations following examinations. In particular, to:
- i. approve programmes of work proposed in applications to register for the degrees of MPhil, MPhil with possibility of transfer to PhD (MPhil/PhD), PhD direct, PhD by published work and professional doctorate programmes;
 - ii. approve the appointment of Principal and Second Supervisors for the candidate's programme of work and approve the appointment of any additional supervisor(s) and/or adviser(s) as appropriate;
 - iii. satisfy itself that the conditions under which a candidate works meet the university's requirements;
 - iv. monitor the progress of candidates through considering their submission of an annual research progress report;
 - v. approve arrangements for candidates who wish to be assessed for transferring their registration from MPhil to PhD;
 - vi. receive and consider assessors' reports on candidates who have been assessed for transfer of registration from MPhil to PhD, and, where appropriate, approve the transfer;
 - vii. approve changes to supervisory arrangements for candidates;
 - viii. approve extensions and interruptions to the period of registration of candidates;
 - ix. approve changes in the mode of study of candidates;
 - x. approve the withdrawal of students from their programme of study;
 - xi. approve examiners and examination arrangements;
 - xii. receive and consider internal and external examiners' reports, and, where appropriate, recommend the conferment of the relevant award on a candidate to Academic Council; and the comments/evaluation from external examiners about the process of the viva voce;
 - xiii. provide feedback to students, supervisors, school/institute and designated lead representatives on the outcome of submissions made to the Committee;
- b. receive and consider statistical data, and any other information relating to the progress of research students, either in relation to the university as a whole, or its constituent schools and institutes;
- c. be responsible for the monitoring of the quality of supervision of research students and for taking such steps as may be required to maintain and improve the quality of such supervision;

- d. implement and monitor mechanisms for the training of supervisors;
- e. monitor the development of 'key skills' programmes;
- f. consider matters brought to the Committee by the Chair, schools and institutes;
- g. promote the development of the postgraduate research community through the encouragement of the specific infrastructure support required to enable postgraduate research to progress;
- h. establish Sub-Committees and Working Groups, as appropriate, to facilitate furthering the work of the Committee;
- i. propose to the Academic Council changes to the Academic Regulations for Research Awards as the need arises;
- j. prepare an annual report on the work of the Committee for consideration by the Academic Council.

31.18.1 Membership

Present in a decision making capacity:

- Chair- Director-General or the Director/Head of Academic Affairs Division
- Two designated members of the Academic Council
- Two designated members of the Board
- Two representatives of the Academic Affairs Division
- Two representatives of the Open School Division
- Two members with a doctorate, who are not members of the staff of the Open University of Mauritius, recommended by the Chair of Open University of Mauritius Research Degrees Committee and approved by the Academic Council and Board.

Secretary

Co-opted members may attend on an occasional basis where it is considered that their attendance would be beneficial to the work of the Committee. This must be agreed by the Chair in advance of attending.

Attendance

In the event of less than full representation, the committee will be considered quorate when six of those who can act in a decision-making capacity are present.

Notes

- i. Persons with experience of successful research degree supervisions at PhD level shall, normally, be preferred.
- ii. No one registered as a candidate for a research or other degree of the University may be a member of the Committee.
- iii. Any matter that cannot be resolved by the Committee should be referred to the Academic Council and the Board for consideration.
- iv. The Secretary of the Committee will be responsible for keeping minutes and enacting follow-up actions. The Chair's Actions should be explicitly noted as such in the minutes. The minutes may be subject from time-to-time to internal or external audit.
- v. The responsibility for maintaining accurate student records rests with the Academic Affairs Division. These records may be subject from time-to-time to internal and external audit.

32.0 REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (DBA)

32.1 Introduction

The purpose of these regulations, and any related policies, guidelines and procedures established by the Open University of Mauritius, is to assure and enhance the quality of education and training of doctoral students, and to create a framework that guides and supports the students and their supervisors.

This Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) has been designed to offer individuals the opportunity to improve business performance by combining experience acquired as a professional and the academic research techniques learnt at the university while producing an original doctoral-level research project. Therefore, people in employment can pursue practise-based research within an organisation to tackle real workplace challenges. As part of the DBA, students are taught the use of research techniques that enable them to understand and reflect upon their ability to utilise and apply theory in order to improve workplace practices. Thus, they develop doctoral-level thinking, a superior capacity to investigate, and research skills as they work through the issues of corporate concern. The synthesis of practical experience and theoretical frameworks together with effective methodological approaches also empower individuals and organisations with new perspectives that add value.

The DBA differs from a PhD. The DBA is a professional doctorate that focuses on business issues and makes contribution to workplace practice, policies and strategies through research carried out in the context of professional practice. PhD. aims at making significant contribution to an area of knowledge.

After completing the DBA successfully, the students are expected to acquire several skills including:

- Demonstrating expertise in one or more subject disciplines;
- Identifying vital and novel business issues;

- Searching and reviewing literature;
- Developing business research questions;
- Using research methods effectively;
- Mastery of techniques to collect, analyze and present data;
- Creating knowledge that is of theoretical and practical significance;
- Demonstrating an ethical attitude when designing and conducting research;
- Writing skills required to present the ideas in a coherent way; and
- Presentation skills required to disseminate work.

32.2 Aim

The DBA course aims at empowering learners to extend and build upon their professional experience through:

- (a) A thorough grounding in research methodology, methods and techniques;
- (b) Development of vital skills including critical thinking, conducting research, writing, synthesising, and analysing, that are necessary to produce an original research-based thesis as well as to contribute significantly to the relevant literature and professional practice;
- (c) Preparation of a substantial and original thesis emanating from an in-depth investigation and analysis of a particular corporate issue or set of issues;
- (d) Bridging the gap between theory and practice by establishing solid links between the University and the world of business; and
- (e) Development of professional excellence through a programme of study that is both academically challenging and professionally relevant.

32.3 Admission

Applicants must have the following:

1. A masters-level degree, either an MBA or a specialist MA or MSc in a related area; and
2. Evidence of substantial management or professional work experience, including within the academic profession.

Prior Learning and Prior Experiential Learning may be considered by OU for admission to this programme. Applicants may be asked to pass an entry test. Applicants with undergraduate degrees and professional experience can elect to complete an MBA degree while pursuing their doctorate. The MBA degree comprises 15 modules.

The admission of an applicant may be subject to conditions specified by the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division.

32.4 Registration

A student for the Degree of DBA must register at the start of the programme of study and shall undertake to comply with the OU Act, Statutes, Rules and Regulations and Charter. Registration shall normally be effective from January/February or July/August in any year according to the quarter in which the programme of study and research is started. A student

must re-enrol by the beginning of each year the programme of study is pursued. The registration of a student who fails to re-enrol may be deemed to have lapsed. No student is entitled to register or re-enrol unless the prescribed annual fees for the year have been paid.

32.5 Mode of Study

Part-time basis and/or in collaboration with industry, a research establishment or other institution having suitable facilities for carrying out research.

Course Stage

Year 1-Semester I

OUdb001111: Research Issues and Professional

Practice OUdb001112: Systematic Literature Review

OUdb001113: Quantitative Methods for Business

Year 1-Semester II

OUdb001121: Research Methods I: Quantitative Research Methods for Business

OUdb001122: Research Methods II: Qualitative Research Methods for Business

Mentored Stage

Year 2-Semester I

OUdb001211: Business Specialisation Research

Supervised Stage

Year 2 – Semester II

Year 3 – Semester I and II

OUdb001311: DBA Thesis

1. Assessment

Each module carries 100 marks and will be assessed as follows:

OUdb001111: Research Issues and Professional Practice

This element will require a written submission of 3,000 words.

OUdb001112: Systematic Literature Review

This element will require a written submission of 5,000 words.

OUdb001113: Quantitative Methods for Business.

Students will be given a set of data that they have to analyse. The assignment will consist of writing a report on the data analysis.

OUdb001121: Research Methods I: Quantitative Research Methods for Business

This element will require a written submission of 2,500 words.

OUdb001122: Research Methods II: Qualitative Research Methods for Business

This element will require a written submission of 2,500 words.

OUdb001211: Business Specialisation Research

The element will require the submission of a research proposal.

For a student to pass a module, an overall total of 40% for combined continuous assessment must be obtained.

OUdb001311: DBA Thesis

The element will require the submission of a thesis of 50,000 words.

The thesis is then submitted formally to the University. Assessment takes the form of a review followed by an oral 'defence' of the thesis, usually referred to as the 'viva voce' which is Latin for 'with the living voice'. The examination is conducted in person or by live video link at the University's discretion. The DBA degree is awarded to successful students.

A student shall indicate by means of explicit references the citation of the work of others or work by the student which is not part of the submission for the Degree. Work submitted for another Degree may not comprise part of the submission for the Degree of Business Administration.

A student shall inform the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, not earlier than six months nor later than two months before the thesis is presented; the proposed title of the thesis must be clearly stated. The title of the thesis must be approved by the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division. No change whatsoever in the approved title may be made except with the consent of the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division.

At the completion of the programme of study or research, a candidate for the degree shall evidence their acquisition of these skills by means of a programme of study and research for the degree of DBA must include all of the following:

- (i) Research leading to a contribution to new knowledge;
- (ii) Sufficient study in discipline-specific matters as to permit a graduate to contribute at the forefront of the relevant profession or research; and
- (iii) Training in elements that allow the student to develop transferable and generic skills.

At the completion of the programme of study or research, a candidate for the degree shall evidence their acquisition of these skills by means of:

- (i) Presentation of a thesis that for the DBA should form a distinct contribution to the current knowledge of the subject. The thesis should also show evidence of a systematic study of the subject.

Successful defence of thesis or portfolio at the viva voce examination. The purpose of such an examination shall be to establish that the:

(a) work presented arises from the candidate's own efforts;

(b) candidate has an awareness of his/her broader subject discipline beyond the confines of the thesis – his/her knowledge being typical of a competent researcher in the discipline; and

(c) candidate is capable of exercising independent critical analysis of data presented. For the degree of DBA, the examination shall in addition seek to establish that:

(a) the candidate has developed the ability to formulate investigations into appropriate questions for study

(b) the candidate is capable of designing a programme of systematic study appropriate to address questions identified as in (a) above.

Students must score at least 40% of the total marks to clear the modules.

Grading

Percentage Range	Description	Grade	Grade Point
70.0% and above	Excellent	A	5
60.0% ≤ x < 70.0%	Very Good	B	4
50.0% ≤ x < 60.0%	Good	C	3
40.0% ≤ x < 50.0%	Satisfactory	D	2
00.0% ≤ x < 40.0%	Ungraded	U	0

All the five modules must be cleared before proceeding to the research stage.

32.6 Minimum Period of Study for DBA

The minimum period of part-time study and research shall be thirty-six months.

32.7 Maximum Period of Study for DBA

The maximum period for a part-time student shall be seventy-two months.

32.8 Extension of Time

A student may apply for an extension of the maximum period of study and research by writing to the Registrar of OU having first obtained the approval of the principal supervisor and Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division (or authorised signatory). Such an application shall be considered by the OU Research Degrees Committee after seeking the opinion of the student's supervisor(s) if necessary. The OU Research Degrees Committee may extend the maximum period of study and research by not more than twelve months at any one time. The registration of a student for whom the maximum period of registration has ended, and for whom no further extension has been granted, shall be deemed to have lapsed and will be terminated.

A student pursuing a programme of study and research on a full-time basis may not simultaneously register for another award of the University, or any other University, except that:

- (i) if a student has completed a programme of study for another award but the award has not been made, the student may register provisionally for a period not exceeding three months;
- (ii) exceptionally and subject to approval by the OU Research Degrees Committee, a student registered at two institutions (the OU and a collaborative partner) may submit his or her thesis for examination at both institutions. Satisfactory performance at each institution would result in a joint/dual award for the thesis.

32.9 Transfer from Another Institution

The OU Research Degrees Committee may permit a student who has started a programme of study and research at another institution to complete it as a registered student of the Open University of Mauritius. The Research Degrees Committee shall specify the minimum and maximum periods of study and research in each case.

32.10 Temporary Withdrawal and Suspension of Registration

A programme of study and research shall be continuously pursued except that the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division may approve temporary suspension of registration for a period not exceeding a total of twelve months, provided the student has not already reached the period of maximum registration and has demonstrated good cause for such a suspension. The Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division shall report any such period of approved temporary suspension of registration to the Director-General/Registrar. In such cases, the student's maximum period of registration shall be extended by the same amount of time.

The OU Research Degrees Committee may, on the recommendation of the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, approve a further period of temporary suspension of registration beyond that already approved by a Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, if the student has not yet reached the end of the maximum period of registration. The OU Research Degrees Committee may, on the recommendation of the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, approve a period of temporary suspension of registration beyond the maximum period of registration. In either case, the period of temporary suspension of registration shall not exceed twelve months at any one time and shall extend the student's maximum period of registration by the same amount of time.

Temporary suspension of registration shall not normally be permitted in the case of a student registered on a continuing basis but the OU Research Degrees Committee may grant permission in exceptional circumstances.

32.11 Transfer Between Modes of Study

A student may be permitted by the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division to transfer between full-time, part-time and collaborative registration. The Director/Head of the

Academic Affairs Division shall inform the Director-General/Registrar of any such transfers. The minimum and maximum periods of registration shall be determined in each case according to the periods in which the student was registered under each mode.

32.12 Supervision

The Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division shall appoint one or more supervisors for each student.

As supervision of doctoral students - a key factor determining the successful and timely completion of a DBA - remains a complex multi-factorial process, and an original research project rarely follows an easily predictable path, every learner is assigned two supervisors as from the second semester. The Principal Supervisor, who is an expert in the field in which the learner wishes to conduct the doctoral study, must possess a PhD. The Second Supervisor provides all necessary administrative support as well as guidance in the field of research methodology and data analysis. The Second Supervisor is an internal staff holding a PhD with experience in supervision of doctoral projects who must monitor and evaluate the research progress at regular intervals. The internal supervisor acts as the 'DBA student counsellor'. The Second (internal) Supervisor will also ensure that there is proper communication between the Principal Supervisor and student, and intervenes in case of conflict between the supervisor and the student. As the combination of time pressure with high academic ambitions can be burdensome, OU also provides additional support to learners to cope with the stress. Through regular meeting of learners from all disciplines, OU endeavours to maintain a positive social environment at the doctoral programme level as it is considered to be vital for the quality of a DBA programme. Open University of Mauritius, which does not have a policy on the number of learners being supervised by a supervisor, ensures that there is high quality of supervision as the student-supervisor relationship has the potential to be wonderfully enriching and productive, but it can also be extremely difficult and personally devastating.

32.13 Reports to Supervisor

A student shall report on the progress of the research to the supervisor(s) in such manner and at such intervals as the supervisors may determine but at least once every six months.

A formal written annual report shall be made to the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division on the anniversary of the student's initial registration. The report shall comprise a section written by the student and a section written by the principal supervisor.

The Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division shall supply to the OU Research Degrees Committee on a quarterly basis a complete list of postgraduate research students, indicating any for whom an annual progress review has not been completed and the reasons why.

An unsatisfactory outcome at an annual review will result in the initiation of unsatisfactory academic progress procedures unless a request for recognition of extenuating circumstances is found to be valid by an extenuating circumstances panel.

Refusal by a student to submit a written annual report may be considered as a reasonable ground for termination of studies by the OU Research Degrees Committee.

The supervisor(s) may require a student to follow a programme of lectures, seminars, colloquia or equivalent educational activities as part of the programme of study and research.

32.14 Unsatisfactory Academic Progress

A student's registration may be terminated on the grounds of unsatisfactory academic progress. If the Supervisors judge a student's progress to be unsatisfactory they must inform

the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division. The details of this consultation will be documented and both parties must be in agreement that the student's progress is unsatisfactory. If there is a disagreement between the parties then the case will be referred to the OU Research Degrees Committee for a decision.

The student will be sent written notification that his/her progress has been deemed unsatisfactory and offered the opportunity to remedy this. The student will be offered at least three months to meet specified targets.

Following the specified period, the student's case will be reviewed by the Supervisors, and one other member of the Open University not previously involved in the case but with knowledge of field of research. If all parties agree that the student has failed to meet the targets to the required standard then a recommendation for programme termination will be made to the OU Research Degrees Committee. If there is a disagreement between the parties, then the case will be referred to the OU Research Degrees Committee for a decision.

Where a student makes a request for the recognition of extenuating circumstances during or after the specified period, this will be considered by the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division. Where extenuating circumstances are found to be valid, the deadline will normally be extended by up to three months subject to the approval of the OU Research Degrees Committee.

A student retains the right to permanently withdraw from a programme of study.

In cases where the student appears to have withdrawn from the programme of study and failed to make contact with the Faculty, it will be sufficient for a recommendation of termination to be made to the OU Research Degrees Committee solely on the basis of evidence showing that reasonable efforts have been made to contact the student at the last email and postal address provided and warning the student of the consequences of not contacting the University within at most 10 working days.

32.15 Format of Thesis

The thesis shall be temporarily bound before it is examined. One copy per examiner shall be submitted to the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division for distribution and, if required, a copy shall be submitted for use by the supervisor. Where appropriate, a copy of the thesis may also be required by a collaborating organisation.

The thesis shall be typed on A4 sized paper. All pages should be numbered. The title page shall bear the approved title, and student's name, the Degree for which the student is registered and the year in which the thesis is presented. A summary of the work, not exceeding 300 words in length and a signed Statement of Originality must be included in each copy following the title page. Whenever possible, subsidiary papers and other material should form part of the thesis, but a student is at liberty to submit such material separately for consideration by the examiners.

The thesis shall be written in English except when the OU Research Degrees Committee has given permission for another language to be used owing to the nature of the subject. The summary should always be written in English.

Following recommendation by the examiners that an award be made, at least one copy of the thesis, and any additional copies as deemed necessary, shall be submitted to the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division. One copy of the thesis of a successful student will be retained in the University Library and the others by the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division and, where appropriate, by the collaborating organisation concerned. A student is advised to keep an additional copy for personal use.

The thesis shall be permanently bound. The binding shall be in blue cloth and hard-backed. The Degree, the year, and the student's name shall appear on the spine. A digital copy of the

final thesis shall also be submitted. No alterations or additions may be made to a thesis after it has been submitted except with the agreement of the examiners.

The Harvard Referencing System must be used.

32.16 Examination

The examination shall be conducted by at least two examiners, at least one of whom must be external to the University.

Normally, there should be one internal and one external examiner. In case, an internal examiner is not available, two external examiners will be selected.

The internal examiner will have the dual role of examining and chairing the viva voce (where applicable) examination unless an independent chair is appointed. Viva voce shall be conducted when there is a major discrepancy in the recommendations of the examiners of the thesis. The examiners must have expertise in examining at the appropriate level so that they are familiar with the standards expected and the achievement likely to be attained. An external examiner must have experience of at least one relevant examination. Where an external examiner does not have the experience necessary, an additional external examiner shall be appointed who may not hold such specialist knowledge but who could supply the necessary examination experience. This does not remove the requirement for an experienced internal examiner unless an independent chair has also been appointed and the arrangements are approved by the Research Degrees Committee.

An external examiner shall not have held any appointment of the University, other than that of external examiner, during the period in which the student had been registered for the Degree, nor had any supervisory relationship with the student. The examiners shall be appointed by OU on the recommendation of the OU Research Degrees Committee. The examiners will not have had any prior formal involvement with the project or have acted as supervisor of the student.

Internal examiners shall normally have expertise in the area relevant to the student's field of research and be demonstrably research active, hold permanent appointments as Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader, Professor, University Director, Professorial or Senior Research Fellow with the Faculty (honorary or joint appointees and retired staff members may also be eligible for appointment).

Independent Chairs will be appointed by the Research Degrees Committee in the following circumstances:

- where a student is being re-assessed upon appeal;
- in cases where two external examiners are required including;
 - where the candidate is a member of the staff of the university;
 - where the University is unable to provide an internal examiner with the appropriate subject matter expertise and a second external examiner is appointed;
 - where two external examiners are required due to lack of examining experience of the preferred subject matter expert and the nominated internal examiner has no prior experience of chairing a viva;
 - in any other special case as determined by the OU Research Degrees Committee

The Chair will be appointed by the Research Degrees Committee on the recommendation of the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division. The Chair will not have had any prior formal involvement with the project or have acted as supervisor of the student.

Each examiner shall submit an independent report on the content and style of the thesis prior to the viva voce examination.

The viva voce examination, wherever applicable, should normally be held not less than thirty days and not more than ninety days after submission of the thesis. Only with the approval of the OU Research Degrees Committee and with the written agreement of both the examiners and the candidate, the viva voce examination may exceptionally be held after twenty days from the date of submission.

The viva voce examination shall be conducted in the presence of the examiners at the Réduit. Exceptionally, and subject to the approval of the OU Research Degrees Committee, the examination may be arranged at another venue, provided all parties, including the student, agree. The viva voce examination may take place via video-conference. The student's supervisor(s) may and would ordinarily expect to be present at the viva voce examination. The student may request in writing to the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division at the time of the thesis submission that the supervisor(s) be present or not be present at the viva voce examination. Reasons need not be given. If the supervisor(s) are present, they may only take part or comment at the invitation of the Chair. If the supervisor(s) are not present, the examiners may, in consultation with and through the Chair, seek answers to questions from the supervisor before, during or after the examination.

No persons other than the above shall be present at or otherwise take part in the viva voce examination, except that the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, or Head of Department at the behest of the Director/Head of the Academic Affairs Division, if not an examiner or supervisor, may be present as an observer.

After the examination, the examiners shall report on the viva voce examination, together with any reports that may have been submitted by the supervisor(s) in response to a request by the examiners. They shall preferably present a joint report but are at liberty to present separate ones if they so wish. They shall jointly make one of the following recommendations, as appropriate:

- (i) that the Degree be awarded;
- (ii) that the Degree be awarded, subject to specified, minor corrections and/or additions being made to the thesis or portfolio to the satisfaction of the Internal Examiner within a period not exceeding six months;
- (iii) that the Degree not be awarded, but that the student be permitted to submit a revised thesis, by a specified date, normally twelve months, with or without further research, and be examined with or without a further viva voce examination [the examiners may, however, recommend (iv) or (v) as an alternative to (iii)];
- (iv) that for those students registered for the DBA, that Degree not be awarded but that the Degree of Master of Philosophy be awarded, if appropriate, after specified minor corrections and/or additions have been made to the thesis or portfolio, and if the student submits the thesis for that Degree within six months or as otherwise agreed by the OU Research Degrees Committee;
- (v) that for those students registered for the DBA, that Degree not be awarded but the student be permitted to submit a revised thesis, for the degree of Master of Philosophy, by a specified date, (normally twelve months), with or without further research, and be examined with or without a further viva voce examination;
- (vi) that the Degree not be awarded and with no recommendation regarding a re-submission of the thesis (normally only applicable following a re-submission).

If specified minor corrections are required in a thesis or portfolio, the Registrar shall inform the student of the nature of the corrections, within twenty days of the viva, in the form of a written list. Any corrections required in a thesis shall be completed within six months of the viva voce examination unless the OU Research Degrees Committee allows a longer time. The thesis shall be permanently bound within the same time limit if it was not bound when submitted for the first time. The Registrar shall, within thirty days of completion by the student, certify that any specified, minor corrections have been carried out satisfactorily and included in the bound thesis. In the case of any re-submission, the student may be liable for additional composition and/or re-examination fees.

The recommendation of the examiners shall be considered by the Research Degrees Committee. If a recommendation that the Degree be not awarded is approved, the student's programme shall be terminated.

A student shall be informed in writing within twenty days after the viva of the reasons for the examiners' rejection of the original thesis, normally by being sent by the Director-General/Registrar (or nominee) a Statement of Requirements prepared by the examiners listing the principal aspects of the thesis which require improvement, a copy of which will be appended to the Examination Entry Form.

A student may submit a revised thesis once only, on the recommendation of the examiners and with the approval of the OU Research Degrees Committee. The Examiners shall determine the date by which the revised thesis shall be submitted, normally twelve months after the original viva voce. If the thesis is not submitted by the specified date, the student's registration may be deemed to have lapsed; the OU Research Degrees Committee may, however, grant an extension of the time permitted.

The procedure for submitting a revised thesis shall be the same as that for submitting the original.

A revised thesis shall normally be examined by both original examiners but the OU Research Degrees Committee may appoint other examiners. The examiners may not recommend re-submission for a second time but may make one of the recommendations, as appropriate, in accordance with (i), (ii), (iv) or (vi) above and should do so within ninety days of receipt of the revised thesis.

If the examiners are unable to agree on a recommendation after the viva voce, the Research Degrees Committee shall appoint an additional external examiner to review the thesis and the original examiners' reports which will be anonymised. The additional examiner may require the student to undergo another viva voce examination. The OU Research Degrees Committee shall consider the reports of all examiners before reaching a decision.

Matters concerning the examination of a student are confidential to those taking part in the examination and appropriate officers of the University. The contents of the thesis are similarly confidential until the award has been approved by the Academic Council and the thesis is available for dissemination.

Dissemination of knowledge is one of the objects of the University. Copies of theses accepted for the DBA are placed in the University Library and are available for anyone to consult. A student is therefore advised to mark the thesis as copyright. It shall, however, be a condition of acceptance of a thesis that the University Librarian be empowered to reproduce the thesis by photocopy or otherwise and to lend copies to those institutions or persons who, in the Librarian's opinion, require them for academic purposes.

If it is considered that the thesis contains matter of a confidential nature, the author may instruct the Librarian to restrict access to a thesis for a period not exceeding five years. Access to the thesis may be allowed during this period only with permission of person(s) specified by the student and/or sponsoring organisation or collaborating body. Similarly, if it is desired to seek a patent from matter in the thesis, the author may instruct the Librarian to

restrict access for a period not exceeding one year. If it is desired to extend the restriction beyond the above periods, or restrict access on other grounds, application must be made by writing to the University Librarian.

While the copyright of the thesis belongs to the author, a student is required to assign to the University or its nominee any intellectual property rights (whether patentable or otherwise) that the student is considered to have acquired resulting directly or indirectly from study at the University in return for a fair proportion of any net receipts. A student may, however, be subject to a specific agreement with the student's sponsor concerning the assignment of intellectual property rights to the sponsor.

32.17 Award

The Degree shall be awarded to a successful student by the OU Research Degrees Committee. The date of the award shall be the date on which the Academic Council approves the award.

No student shall be entitled to the award of a Degree unless all fees for tuition and residence and any other sums due to the University have been paid, and the rightful property of the University returned.

Degrees shall be formally conferred at a Congregation held for the purpose. The Director-General/Registrar shall publish the names of those who have been awarded Degrees.

After the formal conferment, each graduate shall be given a Degree Certificate. The Certificate shall either be handed to the graduate or sent through the registered post to the student's address as listed in the University records. A replacement Certificate can be issued only on receipt of a written request from the graduate and on payment of the appropriate fee.

33.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES

At OU, the highest priority is to ensure the quality of the doctoral education it offers. It is generally accepted that the basis for quality assurance in doctoral education should be research. Quality is best measured in terms of the quality of the candidates who complete the programme, both in terms of the quality of their theses, first and foremost with regard to the originality of the research results achieved, and also with regard to the competences acquired as a result of study activities (courses, communication skills, mobility, and so on). Thus, the students at OU are provided all support and guidance required producing a high quality research. OU has not entirely adopted the traditional model of supervision where a student registers to study on an independent piece of original research under the supervision and guidance of an experienced academic researcher who advises them on the conduct and publication of their research. In fact, OU has adopted the supervision model where students take some coursework and training in key generic skills alongside their research. OU fulfils its quality assurance obligations in different ways, both with regard to formulating academic standards for supervisors, approving supervisors and monitoring the quality of supervision offered.

33.1 Quality Assurance: Internal

The doctoral programme has been carefully designed and duly approved by the Academic Council and Board of the Open University. During the well-planned induction session, every learner embarked on a PhD programme is already informed about the compulsory requirement to publish at least two research papers before being allowed to submit the thesis. During the module Systematic Literature Review, learners are informed about the procedures to publish papers. They are also informed about the journals where they may contemplate to publish their papers. At OU, we spare no effort in establishing a vibrant research environment which is one of the important determinants of the quality of the research. In order to enhance the quality of supervision, regular meetings are held with the supervisors in order to share best practices. As research topic suitability is considered as a significant predictor of candidate completion, the research proposal is finalised together with the supervisor during the second semester of the first year. Learners must prepare a comprehensive research proposal that will form the basis of their thesis. At the time of application, candidates have to submit a synopsis of the research they wish to conduct. OU also conducts periodic assessments of a student's progress as part of its quality assurance procedures. A central element is a portfolio system that coordinates the planning, registration, evaluation and approval of all elements of a PhD student's educational progress. In other words, the portfolio system supports the periodic evaluation of individual progress, and thereby also the quality assurance of PhD education as a whole. There is a brief monthly report on the progress of the student that the supervisor has to submit to the university; a jointly signed record of meetings held between the student and the supervisor is also submitted to the university. At the end of the second year, every learner has to present the work hitherto completed during "work in progress seminars".

33.2 Quality Assurance: External

In collaboration with other partner institutions, assessment of the academic quality of doctoral education is also based on peer review and is sensitive to disciplinary differences. The completion rate and the quality of research papers emanating from the research remain the objectively verifiable indicators of the quality of the programmes. The thesis is thoroughly examined.

As doctoral education is a core element of the traditional identity of a university, OU has been offering doctoral programmes since its first intake. This also helps to train new researchers who can think innovatively and creatively as well as play a pivotal role in overcoming the challenges being faced by the nation through new ideas and intellectual

leadership. At OU, the goal of doctoral education is to empower the doctoral candidate to move from being able to understand and reproduce knowledge as a Master's student to a researcher capable of producing knowledge independently. New knowledge remains the very hallmark of the doctorate. OU spares no effort in ensuring that a doctorate holder is independently capable of working at the frontier of knowledge and managing the challenge of being in an unexplored area. There is a dedicated PhD Coordinator who provides all necessary support to the learners. OU has a comprehensive e-library. Frequent research seminars and workshops are organised. As supervision of doctoral students - a key factor determining the successful and timely completion of a PhD - remains a complex multi-factorial process, and an original research project rarely follows an easily predictable path, every learner is assigned supervisor(s) as from the second semester. The supervisors are experts in the field as well as act as 'PhD student counsellors'. As the combination of time pressure with high academic ambitions can be burdensome, OU also provides additional support to learners to cope with the stress. Through regular meeting of learners from all disciplines, OU endeavors to maintain a positive social environment at the doctoral programme level as it is considered to be vital for the quality of a PhD programme. Due to lack of experienced supervisors and staff holding a PhD, the Director-General also supervises doctoral learners. OU, which does not have a policy on the number of learners being supervised by a supervisor, ensures that there is high quality of supervision as the student-supervisor relationship has the potential to be wonderfully enriching and productive, but it can also be extremely difficult and personally devastating.



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Appendix 1

OU Form 1

Date Received:

STATEMENT OF UNDERTAKING BY LEARNERS

This document should be read, completed and signed by all learners registering for any OU programme.

To: The Registrar

I hereby declare that as a registered learner at the Open University of Mauritius, I will:

- (a) diligently follow the programme of study for which I am registered to its termination;
- (b) inform the University of any special arrangement required due to health problems;
- (c) inform the Registrar, in writing and without delay, if I withdraw from the programme;
- (d) pay all fees and dues required until the completion of studies;
- (e) incur the cost of recovering any additional outstanding balance due to the University;
- (f) comply to all the Rules and Regulations of the Open University of Mauritius;
- (g) conform to the provisions of the Act and Statutes of the University.

Learner Name:

Learner ID:

Programme Registered for:

Programme Code:

Date of Registration:

Signature:

Date:



Open university of Mauritius, Réduit, Mauritius
Tel: (230) 403 8200
Fax: (230) 464 8854
Website: www.open.ac.mu
Email: openuniversity@open.ac.mu

Date Received:

.....

REQUEST FOR MODULE EXEMPTION

Learner Name:

Learner ID:

Date of Registration:

Programme Registered for:

Programme Code:

	Exemption Requested For		Equivalent Module Completed	Grade	Awarding Institution	Date of Completion
Semester/Year	Module	Code				

Enclosures: Certified copies of

☐ Syllabi for equivalent module(s) ☐ Examination results with grades

I declare that the information provided is correct.

Signature of Learner:

Date:

Recommendations of Director of Academic Affairs Division/Programme Manager

.....

.....

Name:

Signature:

Date:

REGULATIONS FOR THE USE OF THE LIBRARY

1.0 Scope

Members of the Library may consult and borrow materials from the Library and receive assistance from Resource Centre Staff. Members may use any or all of the University's Resource Centre facilities. These Regulations apply to all users of the Library and may be enforced by any staff of the Library.

2.0 Entitlement to use the Library

- (i) The following categories of people may register as members of the Library:
 - (a) University learners and provisionally registered learners, for the period of their study.
 - (b) University staff, members of OU Board, the Academic Council and visiting academic staff and researchers, for the period of their appointment to the Open University of Mauritius.
 - (c) Approved external users subject to such arrangements, conditions and fees as the University may determine.
- (ii) The Head of the Library may consider written applications for membership from people otherwise associated with the University.
- (iii) Some parts of the collections may be consulted by non-members who demonstrate sufficient reason/s for consultation of materials to the Head of the Library.
- (iv) The Head of the Library can terminate membership immediately if he/she considers that any aspect of the Library Regulations has been infringed upon.
- (v) Learner members must return all books/materials borrowed from the Library when their registration lapses at the end of their programme, failing which the University reserves the right to withhold the issue of their certificate or to take any appropriate measures.
- (vi) Failure to pay any outstanding amount due to the Library may result in the member being referred to the Disciplinary Committee by the Study/Head of the Resource Centre.
- (vii) Library membership shall terminate automatically when a person ceases to be a member.

3.0 Joining the Library

- (i) Persons who wish to register as members of the Library must fill in and sign a form providing information required for the administration of the Library, and giving an undertaking to be bound by the relevant Regulations.
- (ii) The Library reserves the right to alter, delete, amend or add any clause/s without prior notice.
- (iii) Members must inform the Library immediately of any change of name, address, school or programme. The Library does not accept responsibility for problems or errors arising from a member's failure to do so.
- (iv) Access to the Library is open to members holding the Library Card. This card is required to enact transactions involving issue, return and reservation of Library materials. It must be shown to any staff of the Library on request.
- (v) Library Cards are not transferable. All Library materials issued by means of the card remain the responsibility of the card owner until returned to the Library in satisfactory condition and duly discharged.

- (vi) Members must inform the Library immediately if the card is lost or stolen. The Library does not accept responsibility for problems or errors arising from a member's failure to do so.
- (vii) Issue of a new card will be subject to the payment of a fee as determined by the Open University of Mauritius.

4.0 Behaviour in the Library

- (i) Learners are expected to behave properly in the Library and to show a high duty of care to others.
- (ii) Users who create any disturbance, or misbehave will be severely warned or directed to vacate the Library. Disciplinary action may also follow.
- (iii) Silence must be strictly observed at all times while inside the Library.
- (iv) Smoking or the consumption of food, chewing gum and drink inside the Library premises is not permitted.
- (v) Users may reserve a place in the Library, to cover their absence for not more than thirty minutes at a time. Items left unattended in the Library for long periods may be removed by Library Staff. No Library staff shall be liable to any claim whatsoever.
- (vi) Users may bring bags and other items and keep same at designated places but at their own risk. The University does not accept liability for any loss or damage to the property of members.
- (vii) Lecture groups should not normally be brought to the Library, unless prior arrangement has been made with the Head of the Library, who will request a member of staff to accompany them.
- (viii) Photography, filming and similar activities are strictly prohibited except with the prior permission of the Head of the Library.
- (ix) Mobile telephones must remain switched off at all times inside the Library.
- (x) Users must not write on or otherwise damage books belonging to the Library. Any damage to, or loss of, books must be made good to the satisfaction of the Head of the Library.
- (xi) Any staff of the Library is authorised to do an inspection on users leaving the Library.
- (xii) Persons using the Library's ICT facilities must observe all guidelines in force.
- (xiii) Users must leave the Library by the closing time, immediately on hearing the fire alarm, or when required to do so in an emergency.
- (xiv) Users should immediately report any accident, theft or incident to any staff of the Library.

5.0 Use of Library Materials

- (i) Users are responsible for all Library materials or equipment in their care and will normally be required to pay for any damage to, or loss of, such material or equipment.
- (ii) The cost of the damaged or lost material or equipment shall be calculated by the Library using the replacement cost basis of the item in addition to processing fees and the accrued overdue fines. The amount shall be determined by the Head of the Library.
- (iii) Users must observe copyright law and regulations in respect of all materials whether in print, audio-visual or electronic. The Open University of Mauritius anti-plagiarism regulations shall be strictly observed.
- (iv) Software and data are licensed for educational use only; unless otherwise indicated, they must not be copied or used for commercial purposes. Because the Library must adhere to the licensing terms and conditions of some software, this means that some members may not have access to it or to one or more of its sections.
- (v) Wilful misuse of Library self-service facilities, including automated systems, ICT facilities and photocopiers may result in immediate termination of membership.

6.0 Borrowing Materials

- (i) The Library will make available material for borrowing, consistent with the efficient use of the Library by all members, subject to any conditions of use applicable.
- (ii) All materials borrowed must be authorised and recorded by a member of the Library staff.
- (iii) Members may borrow up to two items at any one time or as otherwise indicated in the internal rules.
- (iv) The length of loan periods shall be determined by the Head of the Library.
- (v) The Library materials fall into one of four categories: standard loan (normally 14 days); 3-day loan; 24-hour loan; not for loan.
- (vi) Only materials in the standard loan and 3-day loan categories count towards members 'borrowing entitlement.
- (vii) Standard loan materials may be renewed for further loan periods, provided that it has not been recalled by the staff of the Library or reserved by another member. Renewal by remote telecommunication means is not permitted.
- (viii) All materials on ordinary loans are subject to immediate recall even if they are within their prescribed loan period.
- (ix) Members must return all materials borrowed on or before the due date which is specified on the date label of the book or on the date specified on the recall notice.
- (x) Failure to return materials by the due date is subject to approved fines.
- (xi) All Library privileges will be suspended from the date of issue of the first overdue notice until such time as the member returns himself or herself to good standing with the Library; normally, this shall mean the return of overdue items and/or the payment of outstanding charges.

- (xii) Any person who ceases to be a member of the Library shall return all materials in their possession promptly and pay any relevant charges.
- (xiii) Library Card holders other than learners must also return all their materials and pay any charges due at the end of their affiliation or contract with OU.
- (xiv) Staff who are on long term leave must return all materials and pay charges where appropriate.

7.0 Copyright

- (i) Copying, recording or downloading from materials or services supplied by the Library must comply with the terms of copyright law and with any University License Agreements governing the use of such materials and services. Such copies, recordings or downloaded files must not be made unless any appropriate Library forms or agreements have been completed and signed by the Library user. The Librarian has the right to refuse or withdraw copying privileges and to suspend access to any services where he has reason to believe that a breach of copyright or license conditions has taken place or is likely to take place.
- (ii) Access to electronic resources will only be granted subject to the conditions of copyright licenses and OU policy.

8.0 Breach of Regulations

- (i) These Regulations must be adhered to at all times. Breach of the Regulations constitutes an offence and will be dealt with as per the Regulations.
- (ii) A breach of the Regulations occurs when a user wilfully or persistently ignores normal arrangements for using or returning materials, or the request of Library Staff concerning behaviour in the Centre.
- (iii) External members who breach the Regulations will have their membership cancelled. Re-admission to membership will be at the discretion of the Head of the Library.

REGULATIONS FOR THE USE OF ICT FACILITIES

1. The following regulations apply to users of all ICT facilities owned by the Open University of Mauritius. Users must also comply with any supplementary specific instructions or regulations.
2. IT facilities are made available to staff and registered learners of the University or to any authorised persons.
3. Users must take all necessary precautions not to cause any form of damage or loss of use or interruption of service to the ICT facilities of the University. Damage and loss of use shall include and shall not be limited to the following:
 - (i) damage to equipment and power supply;
 - (ii) deletion or alteration of software;
 - (iii) alteration of configuration of software and/or hardware;
 - (iv) swapping of components of software and/or hardware;
 - (v) loss of use and disruption of service.

Costs associated with restoring the ICT facilities will be charged to the person or persons causing the damage. The costs will be determined by the designated authority.

4. Use of personal ICT components tied to ICT facilities owned by the University is subject to approval. Unauthorised copying of software or any other copyright materials accessible through University ICT facilities is prohibited.
5. Use of facilities may be subject to legislations, registration and control procedures.
6. Access to facilities may be chargeable.
7. Smoking, eating or drinking in premises where ICT facilities are located are prohibited.
8. Use of any equipment which can interfere with the ICT facilities is prohibited.
9. The University reserves the right to carry out occasional monitoring/control exercises in order to ensure that the above regulations are being followed.
10. Failure to observe any of these regulations shall immediately deny access to the ICT facilities of the University. Such a breach of regulations shall automatically be referred to the Disciplinary Committee of the University.
11. The use of the internet facilities shall be exclusively restricted to the areas of studies of the learner. Special authorisation is needed for other purposes.
12. A reasonable duty of care to other users shall be strictly observed.
13. Installation of software/hardware is prohibited except with prior authorisation.

14. The University reserves the right for appropriately authorised staff to examine any data including personal data held on University systems or, when operationally necessary, for example to give access to a private account to a colleague. Certain staff within the University are authorised to examine files, emails, data within individual accounts and network traffic, but will only do so when operationally necessary or when investigating cases of security breach.
15. The University reserves the right to monitor email, telephone and any other electronically mediated communications, whether stored or in transit, in line with the relevant regulatory and legislative rules/laws.
16. University staff that have access to personal data (as defined under the Data Protection Act 1998) are responsible for ensuring that such data is not made available to unauthorised individuals and that the security of all systems used to access and manage this data is not compromised.
17. The University has the right to access the personal account after the staff member leaves for operational reasons and for the continuing delivery of services.
18. The following are prohibited;
 - Use of obscene and foul language;
 - Transmitting fraudulent materials;
 - Personal attacks or defamation while using OU email, online platform, forums, social network pages;
 - Connecting an unauthorised device to the University network (e.g. private phone, tablets), i.e. one that has not been configured to comply with this policy and any other relevant regulations and guidelines relating to security, purchasing policy, and acceptable use;
 - Circumventing network access. In case you accidentally access documents for which you are not authorised, you should
 - ▣ close the document
 - ▣ inform the IT Unit of the accessed document;
 - Sharing usernames and passwords with anybody;
 - Playing games.

Offenders may be liable to disciplinary actions/legal actions in line with relevant regulations/legislations.



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Date Received:

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REQUEST FOR INTERRUPTION

Surname: First Name: Middle Name:.....

Learner ID: Programme Code:

Status of Programme:

Modules Completed	Module Code	Modules Completed	Module Code

Reasons for Interruption:

.....
Details of Previous Interruptions (if any):

Period of Interruption Requested for:

Proposed Date for Resumption:

I declare that all the particulars furnished by me above are true and correct. I undertake to honour my commitments to the University and to comply with the rules, regulations and decisions of the University and any amendment thereto.

Learner Signature:

Date:

Finance Clearance:

Library Clearance:

Recommendations of the Director, Academic Affairs Division/Programme Manager:

.....
.....

Signature:

Date:



Open university of Mauritius, Réduit, Mauritius
Tel: (230) 403 8200
Fax: (230) 464 8854
Website: www.open.ac.mu
Email: openuniversity@open.ac.mu

Date Received:

.....

WITHDRAWAL FORM

Surname: First Name: Middle Name:.....

Learner ID: Programme Registered:

Status of Programme:

Modules Completed	Module Code	Modules Completed	Module Code

Reasons for Withdrawing (please specify)

- ☐ Financial Reasons:
☐ Continue with Another Institution:.....
☐ Personal:.....
☐ Others:

Would you be interested in returning at a later date? YES ☐ NO ☐

I declare that all the particulars furnished by me above are true and correct. I undertake to honour my commitments to the University and to comply with the rules, regulations and decisions of the University and any amendment thereto.

Learner Signature:

Date:

Recommendations of the Director, Academic Affairs Division/Programme Manager:

.....
.....

Signature:

Date:

REFUND POLICY FOR PROGRAMME/COURSE FEES

In case a learner has already registered for a programme of studies and subsequently decides not to pursue his/her studies, the programme/course fees may be refunded.

The policy for refund of programme/course fees is as follows:

90% refund of fees paid	75% of fees paid	No refund
Non-Starter: That is the learner withdraws before the Induction Session	Provided request for refund is made within 3 weeks after the Induction Session	<i>Request is made after end of the third week from start of the Course deemed to be the Induction Session</i>

1. If a Learner cannot follow the course because of a major unexpected debilitating life event (for example major illness, death in the family, accident requiring long term treatment and convalescence etc.) a request for refund will be considered on a case to case basis. Relevant evidence will have to be produced. However, expenditure already incurred would not be refunded. A proper medical certificate must be submitted by the learner.
2. If a learner who has opted to settle the fees by instalment withdraws, payment made through the bank after he/she has informed OU of his/her intention to withdraw from the programme would be refunded in toto.
3. For Programmes with Partner Institutions: Money already transferred would not be refundable. The remaining amount would be refunded based on the above policy for cases of withdrawal.
4. In case a programme cannot be run for a valid reason, for example insufficient number of learners, then the course fees paid by the applicant would be refunded in toto.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Learner Disciplinary Procedure is intended to provide a clearly formulated and impartial process for dealing with problems of learner discipline or behaviour within a reasonable timescale and having due regard to the spirit of natural justice.
- 1.2 The University is committed to the fair and equal treatment of all individuals.
- 1.3 As members of the Open University all learners are expected to conduct themselves with due regard for its good name and reputation. They are required to comply with the current University's Rules, Regulations, Policies, Procedures and Codes of Ethics/Conduct at all times.
- 1.4 Under 15 (c) of the Open University of Mauritius Act 2010, the Academic Council is responsible for the maintenance of appropriate standards and discipline among OU learners.
- 1.5 This Disciplinary Procedure does not apply to decisions to withdraw learners for reasons of academic failure. Such issues shall be dealt with by Boards of Examiners and appeals against their decision shall be dealt with using the appropriate Academic Appeals Procedures.
- 1.6 To avoid double-jeopardy, once disciplinary proceedings have been instituted against a learner under these Procedures, normally no disciplinary action may be taken against the learner under other disciplinary rules or regulations within the University for the same alleged misconduct.
- 1.7 The University shall normally consider giving advice and guidance to improve conduct and behaviour before initiating the Learner Disciplinary Procedure.
- 1.8 Minor breaches of learner discipline should, where appropriate, be dealt with by means of an informal oral warning issued by any member of staff of the University.
- 1.9 References in the Disciplinary Procedure to any University officer shall include his or her properly appointed nominee.

2.0 Examination Irregularities

Regulations for the examinations are described at Sections 17 - 20. Anything that contravenes these regulations constitutes an offence or examination irregularity that shall be dealt with seriously.

3.0 Misconduct

- 3.1 Any learner studying or registered at the University shall be subject to disciplinary measures if he/she is found to be guilty of misconduct. The essence of misconduct under these regulations is:
 - (a) improper interference with the functioning or activities of the University, or of those who work or study in the University;

(b) action which otherwise damages the University or its reputation.

3.2 In particular, the following examples shall constitute misconduct, whether occurring on University premises or elsewhere:

- (a) any conduct which constitutes a criminal offence;
- (b) disruption of, or improper interference with, the academic, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the University;
- (c) obstruction of, or improper interference with, the functions, duties or activities of any learner or member of staff of the University, or any visitor to the University;
- (d) violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening, intimidating or offensive behaviour or language;
- (e) sexual, racial or other harassment of any learner or member of staff of the University, or any visitor to the University;
- (f) fraud, deceit, deception or dishonesty in relation to the University or its staff, learners or visitors;
- (g) repeated or aggravated academic offences including cheating or plagiarism in academic course work or in examinations;
- (h) theft, misappropriation or misuse of University property, or the property of the University's staff, learners or visitors, caused intentionally or recklessly;
- (i) misuse or unauthorised use of University premises;
- (j) damage to University property, or the property of the University's staff, learners or visitors, caused intentionally or recklessly;
- (k) action likely to cause injury or impair safety on University premises;
- (l) failure to respect the rights of others to freedom of belief;
- (m) failure to disclose personal details to a member of staff of the University in circumstances in which it is reasonable to require that such information be given;
- (n) failure to comply with any reasonable instruction(s) relating to discipline issues with the Director-General's authority;
- (o) breach of the provisions of any University rule, regulation, policy, procedure or code of practice.

4.0 Setting up of the disciplinary Committee

The Disciplinary Committee is established by Academic Council to hear and determine cases arising out of alleged breaches of the University's Regulations.

Composition of the disciplinary Committee: The composition of the Disciplinary Committee is as follows:

- The Chairperson (appointed by the Academic Council)
- The Director, Academic Affairs Division
- The respective Programme Manager
- The Director, Quality Assurance Division or his representative
- Any co-opted member if necessary.

The Secretary of the Disciplinary Committee shall be the Registrar or his/her representative. The recommendations of the Disciplinary Committee will be submitted to the Academic Council for consideration/approval.

5.0 **Initiation of disciplinary procedure**

- (i) The Disciplinary Procedure shall be initiated by any person reporting an allegation of the Registrar/Secretary of the Disciplinary Committee. It shall be the responsibility of the Registrar to notify the learner of the nature of the alleged misconduct/offence.
- (ii) If a matter is to be referred to the Disciplinary Committee, the Registrar shall convene the Disciplinary Committee and shall notify the learner in writing of the alleged misconduct and of the arrangements for further consideration of the learner's case. If there are a series of related alleged misconducts the Disciplinary Committee may, at its discretion, deal with all allegations at one hearing.
- (iii) The Registrar shall normally hold a preliminary interview with the learner in presence of the Director Academic Affairs Division before deciding whether any further action should be taken. The preliminary interview shall normally take place within 5 working days of the alleged misconduct being reported.
- (iv) Subsequent to the interview the Registrar may dismiss the allegations immediately if he/she believes that there is no case for the learner to answer or that it is for some other reason appropriate to do so.
- (v) The Disciplinary Committee shall be arranged as soon as is practicable after the initial interview between the learner and the Registrar. The Secretary shall send to the learner required to appear before the Disciplinary Committee a written summon setting out the alleged offence. This summon shall be delivered to the learner five working days (Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays excluded) before the meeting of the Committee and a copy sent to the Director, Academic Affairs Division. Provided the learner has been properly summoned, if he/she fails to attend the hearing, the Committee may proceed in his/her absence.
- (vi) The Registrar may recommend the suspension of the learner from some or all of their university activities pending further investigation.
- (vii) The learner, against whom the complaint is made, may be accompanied to the Committee by a person to assist him/her. He/she shall inform the Secretary of his/her intention to do so as well as the name of the person assisting him/her, at least twenty-four hours before the date fixed for the meeting.
- (viii) The person who originally reported the allegations to the Registrar (or their representative) shall normally attend to present the case. That person may also be accompanied by a

representative.

- (ix) Witnesses may be called in as necessary. The Secretary may also call for witness statements in support of the allegation in advance of the hearing. If such statements are requested they are required to be submitted to the Registrar at least two working days before the allegation is heard. Such statements shall be circulated to all parties in advance of the hearing.
- (x) Any statement in connection with the case from:
 - The complainant;
 - The learner against whom the complaint is made;
 - Any witness the complainant or the learner wishes to present; may be made in writing for the consideration of the Committee.
- (xi) These statements shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Committee not less than two working days before the date fixed for the meeting.
- (xii) The Committee may require the complainant, the learner against whom the complaint is made and the witnesses for both parties to give evidence before it. The Committee may also require the presentation of further evidence as it deems appropriate.
- (xiii) Witnesses shall normally be required to attend to give evidence in person. The Committee may accept a witness's written statement in evidence where the learner agrees that the witness need not attend, or where it is impracticable for the witness to attend, or where in the opinion of the Committee it is for some other reason in the interest of justice to do so.
- (xiv) The Committee may impose time limits on oral addresses and submissions.
- (xv) The Committee shall rely only on evidence presented at the hearing, or in written format beforehand.
- (xvi) The Order of Proceedings shall normally be as follows:
 - (a) Introduction of those present;
 - (b) The allegations of misconduct shall be set out by the Chairperson;
 - (c) The learner, or his/her representative, shall respond to the allegations;
 - (d) The Disciplinary Committee shall have the opportunity to question both the complainant and the learner;
 - (e) Either party may call witnesses who shall attend only to present their evidence and to answer any questions that the Committee or the other party may put to them through the Chair. Once their evidence has been heard and there are no more questions, witnesses shall be required to withdraw;
 - (f) The Disciplinary Committee will deliberate and reach their decision in camera.
- (xvii) Either party may request an adjournment of not more than seven days. The Committee shall allow such cross-examination by either the complainant or the learner against whom the complaint is made as it deems relevant.
- (xviii) Having concluded the hearing, the Committee shall deliberate in camera and send a formal

report to the Academic Council with appropriate recommendation/s.

- (xix) The Committee shall find a learner guilty of misconduct only if, on the evidence before it, it is satisfied on the balance of probability of the learner's guilt. If the members of the Committee cannot agree, the verdict of the Committee shall be that of the majority of its members.
- (xx) In the light of the Report, the Disciplinary Committee shall recommend the actual penalty to be applied having regard to the seriousness and the recurrence of the offence.
- (xxi) Wherever possible, the decision of the Disciplinary Committee shall be communicated verbally to the learner and to the complainant within five working days of adjourning to consider the evidence.
- (xxii) The proceedings of the Committee shall remain confidential, with the exception of its decision.

6.0 Illness

- (i) If it appears to those considering an allegation of misconduct that the learner in question is suffering from illness, the proceedings may be adjourned for the preparation of a medical report.
- (ii) If there is medical evidence that the learner is suffering from illness, those dealing with the case may suspend or terminate the proceedings, if it is felt appropriate to do so. It may be made a condition of suspension or termination of the proceedings that the learner seeks appropriate support and/or treatment.

7.0 Suspension pending hearing

- (i) A learner who is the subject of a complaint of misconduct or criminal proceedings may be suspended by the Academic Council upon recommendation of the Registrar pending a disciplinary hearing and/or conclusion of the criminal proceedings.
- (ii) A learner who is suspended may be wholly or partly prohibited from entering University premises and from participating in University activities. Suspension may be subject to qualification, such as permission to take an examination. The terms of the suspension shall be notified in writing to the learner. An order of suspension may include a requirement that the learner shall have no contact with a named person or persons.
- (iii) Orders of suspension pending a disciplinary hearing and/or criminal proceedings are to be used only where necessary to protect the University or its members, or the property of the University or its members or to facilitate an investigation into the facts. Written reasons for the decision shall be recorded and made available to the learner.
- (iv) Normally no learner shall be suspended unless he/she has been given the opportunity to make representations to the Registrar either in person or in writing, as the learner chooses. Such representations may be put forward by the learner only.
- (v) In cases deemed to be urgent, particularly if the safety of others is perceived to be at risk, a learner may be suspended with immediate effect and before being given the opportunity to make representations. In this instance the learner shall be permitted to put forward representations at the earliest possible opportunity thereafter.
- (vi) In any event any decision to suspend a learner shall be subject to review after 10 working days. Such a review shall not involve a hearing but the learner, either personally or through his representative shall be entitled to submit written representations. The review shall be conducted by the Appeal Committee.

8.0 Misconduct that is also a Criminal Offence

The following procedures apply where the alleged misconduct is reported to the Registrar and the misconduct, if proved, would also constitute an offence under the criminal law. A serious offence is one that is likely to attract an immediate custodial sentence if proved in a criminal court.

- (a) Where the Registrar does not regard the alleged misconduct as constituting a serious offence, it may be dealt with internally. If the offence is reported to the police, the Registrar may decide to defer action until the police investigation is over.
- (b) Where the Registrar does regard the alleged misconduct as constituting a serious offence, no internal action other than suspension from the University shall normally be applicable until the matter has been reported to the police, and any subsequent criminal proceedings have been completed.
- (c) The University shall normally report any suspected criminal offence to the police. However, if a person claims to be the victim of an offence committed by a learner, but does not wish the police to be involved, the Registrar may agree not to report the matter. In such circumstances the University shall not normally proceed with internal disciplinary measures for the alleged offence, although it may take disciplinary action over related offences.
- (d) Where a finding of misconduct has been made under these regulations, and a learner has also been sentenced by a criminal court in respect of the misconduct, the penalty imposed by the criminal court shall be taken into consideration in determining the penalty under these regulations.

9.0 Penalties

- (a) If a learner is found guilty of an allegation of misconduct/offence, penalties may be imposed by the Academic Council upon recommendation of the Disciplinary Committee.
- (b) When determining penalties, consideration shall be given to the seriousness of the misconduct, the circumstances of the misconduct, and the means and general personal circumstances of the learner.
- (c) In case of offences related to examination irregularities, the following penalties may be recommended to the Academic Council for approval either separately or in combination in the deliberate judgment of the Committee:
 - (i) The learner is given benefit of doubt.
 - (ii) A warning or a severe written warning is issued to the learner depending on the seriousness of the offence.
 - (iii) The module where examination irregularity was found is taken again when the module is next offered. The maximum mark for the re-sit is the minimum pass mark.
 - (iv) All modules cleared are reset in the current semester to minimum pass mark.
 - (v) Suspension from the University for a period to be determined by the Disciplinary Committee and repeating without exemptions the semester in which the learner was found guilty.

- (vi) Expulsion from the University, hence terminating the learner's registration. Re-admission, if requested shall be, without exemptions.
- (d) In case of offences other than examination irregularities, the following penalties may be recommended to the Academic Council for approval either separately or in combination in the deliberate judgment of the Committee:
- (i) A first written warning.
This shall give details of the complaint, the improvement required and the timescale. It shall warn that further disciplinary action will be considered if there is no satisfactory improvement. It shall also advise of the right of appeal. A copy of the written warning shall be placed in the learner's file, but will be removed from the file and disregarded for disciplinary purposes after a period of 12 months, subject to satisfactory conduct and performance within that period;
 - (ii) A final written warning.
This shall be issued if there is still a failure to improve and conduct remains unsatisfactory, or if the misconduct is sufficiently serious to warrant only one written warning but not to justify expulsion. A Final Written Warning shall give details of the complaint, shall warn that expulsion is likely to result if there is insufficient improvement and shall advise of the right to appeal. A copy of this Final Written Warning shall be placed in the learner's file. The Final Written Warning shall be removed from the file and disregarded for disciplinary purposes after a period of 24 months, subject to satisfactory conduct and performance within that period;
 - (iii) Suspension from the University for a fixed period of time, up to a maximum of twelve months. A learner who is suspended is prohibited from entering University premises, and from participating in University activities. Suspension may be subject to qualification, such as permission to take an examination. The terms of the suspension shall be notified to the learner in writing. An order of suspension may include a requirement that the learner shall have no contact with a named person or persons;
 - (iv) Expulsion from the University, which means that the learner ceases to be a member of the University, and loses all rights and privileges of membership.

On the other hand, a learner may plead guilty in writing instead of attending the Disciplinary Committee. Such voluntary disclosure may be favourably considered by the Committee.

10.0 Appeal

- (i) A learner may appeal against a finding of guilt or a penalty imposed following a finding of guilt. The appeal must be made in writing to the Registrar within 5 working days of receipt of the written confirmed decision of the Academic Council against which he/she is appealing and must specify the grounds on which it is based.
- (ii) An amount of Rs 5,000/-(five thousand rupees) as deposit must be made while lodging the appeal. Such deposit will be refunded in case the Appeal is successful.
- (iii) Composition of Appeal Committee: The Appeal will be considered by an Appeal Committee composed of:
 - A Chairperson, independent and outside OU appointed by the Director-General

- Two members of academic staff appointed by the Director, Academic Affairs Division who have not been involved in the cases being considered
 - Any co-opted member as and when necessary
 - A representative of the Registrar as Secretary.
- (iv) Any person who was a member of the Disciplinary Committee shall take no part in the meeting of the Appeals Committee at which any appeal from the Disciplinary Committee's decision is considered (except for the purposes of presenting a report).
- (v) The composition of the Appeal Committee shall be approved by the Academic Council. The Chair of the Disciplinary Committee shall also be entitled to make a written submission or oral representations to the Appeals Panel.
- (vi) The Appeals Committee shall in its discretion have power to call witnesses and examine any evidence relevant to the subject of the appeal and may adjourn its proceedings or defer its decision for that or any other purpose.
- (vii) The Appeal Committee hearing an appeal against a penalty may impose a lesser or greater penalty, having considered whether the original penalty imposed was fair and reasonable in the light of all the circumstances of the case, and the learner's means and general personal circumstances.
- (viii) Where an appeal is pending against a decision of the Disciplinary Committee to suspend or expel a learner, the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee shall have power to defer the operation of the suspension or expulsion pending the appeal.
- (ix) The Appeals Committee shall consider its decision in camera and shall notify the appellant of it in writing but shall not be obliged to advise the appellant of the reasons for it. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final and no further appeal may be permitted within the University.
- (x) The recommendations of the Appeal Committee upon approval of the Academic Council shall be final.

REGULATIONS FOR ACADEMIC APPEALS

Any learner who has evidence or believes that evidence exists to show that a programme grade was assigned or similar evaluation was made as a result of prejudice, caprice or other improper conditions, such as administrative or computational error, may appeal against the said grade/evaluation to the Registrar using an academic appeal form available in the Examination Unit.

Thus

- (i) A learner who has ground for considering that there is an error in the marks awarded for the examinations may request for a review of examination scripts.
- (ii) A learner may request that an assessment decision be reviewed on the grounds that:
 - (a) The assessment was not conducted in accordance with the regulations for the programme; or
 - (b) The judgement of the examiner was improperly affected by personal bias; or
 - (c) There was a material administrative error or some other material irregularity in the conduct of the assessment, such that the assessment decision would have been different had the error or irregularity not occurred.

An appeal may only be lodged by a learner of the University; it may not be lodged by a representative or by a parent.

Timing of Appeals

An appeal must be made not later than 14 successive days following the official publication of results.

Basis of Appeal

An appeal must be made using the Request for Academic Appeal Form at Annex, giving the learner's name and ID number, contact details (address and telephone number), the programme code and title, the Programme Manager's name and the grounds for appeal together with any supporting evidence. The burden of proof is on the learner.

Membership of the Academic Appeal Committee

The Appeal Committee comprises the following members:

- A Chair, independent and outside OU appointed by the Director-General
- 2 academic staff who have not been involved in the cases being considered
- A representative of the Registrar as Secretary.

Steps in the process of an Academic Appeal

- (i) Appeal against results for re-sit examinations shall not be entertained.

- (ii) The appellant shall forward the duly filled prescribed appeal form to the Registrar who will then notify the Director, Academic Affairs Division.
- (iii) An appeal fee of Rs 3,000 (USD 100 for foreign learners) per module in the form of an office cheque must be enclosed. If the appeal for a particular module is successful, the appeal fee for that module will be refunded.
- (iv) The learner will be notified of the date, time and place of the meeting and invited to attend the meeting.

In case of Hearing

- (v) The learner may have an advisor and/or a learner representative present during the meeting, who may advise the learner but not speak for the learner during the meeting.
- (vi) If the learner wishes to have legal counsel present at the meeting, the name and address of such legal counsel shall be provided at the time of filing the appeal.
- (vii) The procedures regarding recheck of marks and grades, re-correction of papers etc. by an independent person will be determined by the Director, Academic Affairs. A report to this effect must be submitted to the Appeal Committee.
- (viii) The Chair of the Appeal Committee may also call the academic staff/tutor who recommended the grade under appeal and, if need be, anyone else, including external assessors, with expertise relevant to the appeal.
- (ix) Where a member of the Appeal Committee is challenged by the appellant learner on grounds such as conflict of interest, bias or malice, the remaining members of the Committee shall consider the merits of the challenge and determine whether or not the member is disqualified from hearing the appeal. If the Chair of the Committee is unable to sit for any reason, including disqualification, the Committee will elect an Acting Chair.
- (x) The recommendation of the Appeal Committee will be submitted to the Academic Council for consideration and approval.

The recommendations of the Appeal Committee upon approval of the Academic Council shall be final.
- (xi) The Registrar will then inform the learner of the decision of the University.



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Annex

OU Form 5

Date Received:

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REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC APPEAL FORM

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please complete all requested information. Explain the extenuating circumstances which you wish to have considered under the “Comments” section of this form. Please attach extra sheets to support your appeal if needed. Attach supporting documentation.

Surname: First Name:
Learner ID: Email:
Address:
Mobile Phone:

This appeal concerns the following modules:

Semester	Year	programme	Module	programme Manager's Name

Learner's Comments/Justifications: (Attach additional sheets if necessary)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

For Office Use:

Comments of Director, Academic Affairs Division

.....
.....

Signature:

Decision of Appeal Committee

☐ Approved

☐ Denied

☐ Pending

Signature:

Registrar

GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR THE AWARD OF QUALIFICATIONS

Regulations for OU Certificates/diplomas

1. (i) Amendments to any programme of study may be made by the Academic Council without notice on the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Division.
- (ii) The Academic Council may, on the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Division and after reasonable notice, cancel a scheme of study for a particular Academic Year.
2. In order to qualify for the award of the Open University Certificate, a learner must:
 - (i) Study in accordance with the programme document approved by the Academic Council.
 - (ii) Pass the examinations and other forms of assessment prescribed in the programme document.
3. (i) Before presenting himself/herself for any one of the examinations, a learner must have completed the prescribed programme of study and
- (ii) The learner shall present himself/herself for examination at the due time.
4. A learner shall take semester examinations during the period of study at such time and in such subjects as the Academic Council may, on the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Division, determine and shall undergo such other forms of assessment as may be prescribed in the programme document.
5. On the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Division, the Academic Council may terminate the registration for a scheme of study of a learner who fails to satisfy the examiners in a semester or final examination.
6. Examination and other forms of assessments shall normally be held at the end of each semester as per the scheme of study.
7. A learner who has completed the scheme of study but has been prevented from taking the whole or some part of an examination may take a special examination on the recommendation of the Director, Academic Affairs Division provided:
 - the learner has presented evidence of illness supported by a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner or
 - other urgent cause accepted by the Registrar as constituting sufficient reason for being absent from the examination.
8. A member of the academic staff shall report to the Director, Academic Affairs Division any factor which may affect the performance of the learner in any part of the scheme of study and which may assist the examiners in the performance of their duties. The Director, Academic Affairs Division shall pass this information to the Chairperson of the appropriate Board of Examiners.
9. The Certificate/Diploma for the programme of study shall be awarded on the results of the

final assessment which shall be based on performance in the final examination and on such other forms of assessment as may be prescribed in the scheme of study. In order to obtain a Certificate/Diploma, a learner must satisfy the examiners in all parts of the final assessment.

10. The names of learners who, in the opinion of the examiners have obtained in the final assessment either Pass or Pass with Distinction, shall be published by the Registrar with the approval of the Academic Council on the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Division in separate lists. The names of learners shall be arranged in alphabetical order.
11.
 - (i) Learners may re-sit up to a maximum of three ungraded modules, which will be assessed through re-sit exams.
 - (ii) A module not taken through absence will be counted as an ungraded (U) module and will be taken as a re-sit. If the re-sit is passed the learner will be eligible for the full marks obtained for an authorised absence and a minimum pass mark for an unauthorised absence.
 - (iii) Learners may carry up to a maximum of three ungraded modules for each semester unless otherwise prescribed by Academic Council on the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Division for a specific programme.
 - (iv) These ungraded modules may be taken as a re-sit in the next semester with the next cohort provided the programme is available.
 - (v) Learners who fail to correct their failures shall be given a maximum of three chances to clear same before they become eligible for the final award. Learners who pass a re-sit examination will be eligible for the award of the minimum pass mark.
 - (vi) Specific Regulations for individual programmes are provided under the programme requirements.

Regulations for First degrees

1. The Following General Degree Regulations apply to all undergraduate degrees awarded by the University.
 - (i) Every applicant for admission to a programme leading to a first degree is required to comply with the entrance requirements of the particular degree to which admission is sought.
 - (ii) Every learner for a degree must:
 - (a) pay the required approved fees unless granted an exemption or other approved arrangements
 - (b) duly fulfill the prescribed requirements for each programme required for a degree programme
 - (c) complete the degree assessment prescribed for each such programme.
 - (iii) Learners shall not be allowed to register for any Academic Year unless all Regulations have been satisfied.
 - (iv) The method of assessment of each programme and Honours programme shall be determined by the Academic Council. The conditions under which learners may be exempted from any element of such assessment shall be determined similarly.

- (v) Learners who wish to establish that their academic performance has been adversely affected by their health are required to secure medical certificates from state-employed doctors relating to the relevant periods of ill-health.
 - (vi) If a learner who has completed the scheme of study has been prevented from taking the whole or part of an examination and has presented evidence of ill-health, supported by a medical certificate issued by a state medical practitioner, or other urgent cause which has been notified to the Registrar as constituting sufficient reason for being absent from the examination, the Academic Council may, on the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Division, permit the learner to take a special examination at the second sitting.
 - (vii) In each degree with Honours there shall be three grades of Honours denominated respectively the First, Second and Third Class. The names of the learners in the Second Class shall be arranged in two divisions. The names of the learners in the First and Third Classes and in each division of the Second Class shall be arranged in alphabetical order. The Board of Examiners may recommend the award of a Pass Degree to a learner who cannot be placed in any of the three grades of Honours, but whose performance the Board of Examiners deem to be worthy of the award of the degree.
 - (viii) In the case of learners who have been unable to complete an element of Honours degree assessment in time as per Regulations on account of illness or other valid reason/s:
 - (a) The Board of Examiners may recommend that Honours be awarded as if the module had been completed, provided it is satisfied that a sufficient part of the total assessment for the Honours programme has been completed for it to pass judgment on the learners' performance;
 - (b) If, and only if, the Board of Examiners is unable to make a recommendation under subparagraph (a) above: learners may be allowed to count for the purposes of Honours Degree assessment in a module not completed by them, subject to the permission of the Academic Council.
 - (ix) Any learner, who has complied with the provisions of the General Degree Regulations, is entitled to graduate with that degree.
 - (x) If a learner who passes all modules of a Level chooses/has to leave the programme, he/she may be awarded a Certificate or a Diploma provided he/she has accumulated the required number of credits for the award of Certificate or Diploma respectively.
2. (i) Where a programme of study includes a dissertation/project, the dissertation shall be of a prescribed length and be presented in typed form not later than the time prescribed by the Academic Affairs Division.
- (ii) A learner shall state in the dissertation the sources from which the information it contains is derived and the extent to which the learner has made use of the work of others.
 - (iii) A learner may not submit a dissertation, a substantial part of which consists of material which has been submitted for any other degree or qualification.
 - (iv) The Dissertation/Project shall be subject to the University anti-plagiarism policy in force.

3. Requirements to be fulfilled for the Award of the university's First degrees

- (i) Learners may carry up to a maximum of three failed modules for each semester of the programme, unless otherwise prescribed by the Academic Council on the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Division for a specific programme.

These failures in the modules may be taken as re-sits in the next semester with the next cohort provided the programme is available/practical exceptionally, upon approval of the Director, Academic Affairs Division.

- (ii) A module not taken through absence will be counted as a failed module and will be taken as a re-sit at the next level with the next cohort. If the re-sit is passed the learner will be eligible for the full mark obtained for an authorised absence and a minimum pass mark for an unauthorised absence.
- (iii) Learners who fail to correct their failures shall be given a maximum of three chances to clear same before they become eligible for the final award. When re-sat and passed they will be eligible for the award of the minimum pass mark.
- (iv) Learners who have failures in more than 3 modules in any semester of the programme may be withdrawn from the programme. Learners who are withdrawn may choose to repeat the semester they are currently in, provided the programme is available. Under any other circumstances, the University reserves the right to direct the learner to proceed to the next semester at its discretion.
- (v) Learners who are granted permission to repeat a semester will be eligible for exemption for modules in which they have an original overall score of at least 50% and will be credited with the original mark in these modules. When repeating the semester, learners will be awarded the marks they gain when retaking the modules for which they are not exempted.
- (vi) A learner who fails a final year project and subsequently resubmits it will only be eligible for the award of the Pass Degree.
- (vii) Specific Regulations for individual programmes are provided under the programme requirements.

Regulations for Master's degrees, postgraduate diplomas and postgraduate Certificates

1. The following Regulations apply to Master's Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates. Learners must also satisfy supplementary regulations which govern individual Postgraduate programmes.
2. A person may normally be admitted as a learner for a Master's Degree if he/she
 - (i) is a recognised graduate and who has attained a standard at least equivalent to that of a Honours Degree in a subject related to that of the proposed programme of study accepted by the Academic Council,

or

 - (ii) has passed an examination including a professional qualification in such a subject at a standard equivalent to year 3 or equivalent to an Honours Degree,

or

- (iii) has been deemed qualified for admission as learner by the Academic Council on the recommendation of the Academic Affairs Division,

or

- (iv) being a learner for Postgraduate Diploma, is permitted by the Academic Council to transfer to a Master's Degree in the same subject.

However, OU reserves the right to accept or to reject any application.

3.
 - (i) To qualify for a Master's Degree award, the learner must duly fulfill the prescribed requirements of the programme of study.
 - (ii) The programme of study shall be by examination, coursework and/or dissertation/projects as appropriate.
 - (iii) For each individual programme of study the modules required shall be specified and may include assignments with no credit value which must be completed by the learner for the award of the degree.
4. The programme of study for a Master's Degree by examination, coursework and/or dissertation/projects as appropriate shall be not less than two academic years.
5. A learner who is awarded the required number of credits as per the specified programme documents shall pass the examination either for a Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma or a Master's Degree.
6.
 - (i) Where a programme of study includes a dissertation/project, the dissertation shall be of a prescribed length and be presented in typed form not later than the deadline prescribed by the Academic Affairs Division.
 - (ii) A learner shall state in the dissertation the sources from which the information it contains is derived and the extent to which the learner has made use of the work of others.
 - (iii) A learner may not submit a dissertation, a substantial part of which consists of material which has been submitted for any other degree or qualification.

The Dissertation/Project shall be subject to the University anti-plagiarism policy in force.

7. Requirements to be fulfilled for the Award of the University's Master's Degree or Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate
 - (i) Learners may re-sit up to a maximum of two failed modules for the semester of the programme.
 - (ii) A module not taken through absence will be counted as a failed module and will be taken as a re-sit. If the re-sit is passed the learner will be eligible for the full mark obtained for an authorised absence and a pass mark for an unauthorised absence. Absence at any other form of assessment will be counted as a failure.
 - (iii) Learners who have had a failed module will not be eligible for the award of a Master's Degree with Distinction.
 - (iv) Learners who fail to correct their failures shall be given a maximum of three chances to

clear same before they become eligible for the final award. When re-sat and passed they will be eligible for the award of the minimum pass mark.

- (v) Learners who fail more than 3 modules may be withdrawn.
- (vi) Under any other circumstances the University reserves the right to direct the learner to continue his/her studies.
- (vii) A learner who fails a Master's Project/Dissertation and subsequently passes it will only be eligible for the award of a Master's Degree at a pass level.
- (viii) Specific Regulations for individual programmes are provided under the programme requirements.

FUNCTIONS OF OU OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE

1. **Setting up the Compliance and Monitoring unit**

(a) General purpose

OU Office of Compliance, under the direction of a Head of Compliance, is responsible for managing, monitoring, and assisting OU in its efforts to

- (i) raise awareness regarding legal and ethical issues
- (ii) ensure adherence to the highest standard of conduct
- (iii) inform employees about the standard of conduct
- (iv) inform learners about the standard of conduct/discipline
- (v) perform and/or arrange periodic compliance/quality improvement reviews
- (vi) conduct investigations of complaints for non-compliance
- (vii) maintain a reporting and question hotline for compliance matters
- (viii) assist with the correction of compliance concerns and
- (ix) draft and implement, in coordination with the applicable Units, any necessary policies and procedures.

(b) Structure

The Office of Compliance will report to the Registrar.

The Head of Compliance manages and monitors the University's compliance activities. The day-to-day decisions will be made by the Head of Compliance. The Head of Compliance will coordinate, identify and build on existing policies and procedures.

(c) Responsibilities of the head of Compliance

The role of the Head of Compliance is to coordinate compliance activities. The Head of Compliance will have authority to review documents and records relevant to compliance activity. The duties of the Head of Compliance will include, but not be limited to, the following activities:

- Oversee implementation of compliance in all areas as designated by the Board
- Work with other Units, Divisions and Institute to prevent, detect and respond appropriately to compliance issues
- Establish a reporting system with University employees who have compliance responsibilities
- Serve as a resource for the University on matters of compliance
- Perform routine, periodic compliance reviews, or arrange for such reviews, of high-risk areas

- Monitor (in conjunction with the Legal Adviser if necessary) developments and changes in statutes, court rulings, rules and regulations that affect compliance requirements; bring them to the attention of the appropriate officers and employees; and assist with remedial activities

when appropriate

- Make recommendations, as needed, to University departments regarding their compliance efforts
- Submit periodic reports
- Conduct investigations in coordination with the relevant division/unit and act on compliance related matters. The Head of Compliance will notify the appropriate University officer
- Monitor and respond to any questions, concerns and reports of possible violations reported through any means.

(d) Core Elements of Compliance

- OU Act of 2010
- Relevant laws
- University's Rules and Regulations
- Processes & Procedures & Controls
- Code of Conduct for OU Staff (Please see Annex)
- Code of Conduct for Learners as described in the Regulations and the Learners' Charter.

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

Intent

The Code of Conduct establishes a standard by which staff conduct themselves towards others and perform their professional duties on behalf of the University. This Code helps staff to aspire to the highest standards of ethical conduct.

Scope

The Code of Conduct applies to all staff of the Open University of Mauritius while acting in their official capacity.

Definitions

Personal information - information about an identified or identifiable individual that is not available in the public domain.

Records management - the control and management of records to meet business, legal and regulatory requirements and compliance with standards governing professional practice. It is a business imperative, a corporate responsibility and a critical function performed through the collective actions of individuals.

Record - recorded information in any form, including data in computer systems, created or received by any staff member of the University in the course of his/her duties.

Conflicts of interest – occur where staff with a particular interest can be influenced, or may appear to be influenced, in the performance of their duties.

Staff – for the purposes of this Code, means all staff including senior management, executive, contractual staff, part time staff.

Sustainability - the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Policy and Procedures

In our professional actions, and in dealing with other staff, students and the community, we will be guided by the Act establishing the University, University's Statement of Strategic Intent, the University Strategic Plan, the University's policies and other official documents.

The Code outlines four fundamental ethical principles which are fundamental to good public administration:

- integrity and impartiality
- promoting the public good
- commitment to the system of government and
- accountability and transparency.

These ethical principles form the basis of the obligations outlined in this Code of Conduct.

The University has developed its own principles to guide the actions of staff. These principles are outlined below.

Principle 1: Seek excellence as part of a learning community

This principle aligns with the first ethical principle of the Code – 'integrity and impartiality', and the second ethical principle of the Code – 'promoting the public good'.

In our conduct, we will:

- endeavour to achieve excellence in the performance of our work and strive for continuous improvement
- seek discoveries that make a difference through research, reflection and innovation
- actively engage in learning and in personal and professional development
- value academic freedom, and enquire, examine, criticise and challenge in the collegial and academic spirit of the search for knowledge, understanding and truth
- behave with intellectual honesty
- undertake teaching and research in a responsible manner
- encourage participation in professional external activities, provided that they are appropriate to our roles and they do not impinge upon our prescribed duties
- have the right to freedom of expression, provided that our speech is lawful and respects the rights of others
- encourage collaboration across boundaries
- comply with the ethical standards and legal obligations of our professions.

Principle 2: Act with integrity

This principle aligns with the first ethical principle of the Code – 'integrity and impartiality', with the third ethical principle – 'commitment to the system of government', and with the fourth ethical principle – 'accountability and transparency'.

In our conduct, we will:

- behave honestly, impartially and with integrity
- act with care and diligence
- maintain appropriate confidentiality regarding University business
- act in good faith in all of our undertakings
- honour our promises, commitments and obligations to stakeholders
- act with authenticity, sincerity and truthfulness
- engage in genuine dialogue with other staff, students and stakeholders through transparent, open and honest communication and consultation
- ensure that ethical governance structures and systems are established and maintained
- behave in a way that upholds the integrity and good reputation of the University
- protect University resources, and take all possible care to use them in a proper manner
- take responsibility for our mistakes, work to rectify problems as soon as possible, and ensure that those who have admitted mistakes are treated with fairness and dignity
- not make improper use of our position, status, power or authority to gain, or seek to gain, a benefit or advantage for ourselves or any other person
- will not accept gifts or benefits where these are intended to influence our decision-making
- take reasonable steps to avoid, or disclose and manage, any conflict of interest (actual,

- potential or perceived) in the course of employment
- avoid placing ourselves in direct positions of responsibility relating to the employment or studies of a person, where we have, or have had, a close personal relationship with that person
- comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by someone who has authority to give that direction
- make well-considered decisions, and provide reasons for these decisions where required, especially where they may have an adverse effect on people
- act within the limits of our authority
- adhere to proper records management practices and procedures, so that records are complete, up-to-date and capable of providing organisational accountability
- maintain the privacy, integrity and security of official and personal information and ensure the proper use of information systems
- respond in good faith to those who seek access to non-personal information, provided this is not contrary to the public interest and does not betray commercial-in-confidence principles
- disclose wrongdoing and protect those who make a disclosure
- avoid any conduct, including alcohol or substance abuse or misuse, which would adversely affect our work performance and
- comply with all relevant legislative and statutory requirements.

Principle 3: Behave with respect for others

This principle aligns with the first ethical principle of the Code – 'integrity and impartiality'.

In our conduct, we will:

- treat fellow staff members, students and members of the public with honesty, respect and courtesy, and have regard for the dignity and needs of others
- respect and celebrate diversity
- act to ensure equity, fairness and natural justice are afforded to all
- seek to resolve disputes in a fair and timely manner
- strive to create an environment which provides a safe and healthy workplace for employees, students and members of the community
- investigate any complaints that have been lodged against staff or students in a consistent, prompt, fair and timely manner
- avoid and not accept behaviours which are unwelcome, discriminatory, intimidatory or abusive
- refrain from, and not accept, unkind remarks, bullying, harassment or sexual harassment.

Principle 4: Embrace sustainability and social responsibility

This principle aligns with the second ethical principle of the Code – 'promoting the public good' and the fourth ethical principle – 'accountability and transparency'.

In our conduct, we will:

- strive to minimise the University's environmental impact and to protect the natural environment
- act to ensure the efficient, effective and sustainable use of resources
- strive to embed environmental, social, economic and cultural sustainability in all our activities
- promote socially-inclusive employment practices.

Compliance with the Code of Conduct and associated Explanatory Statement

- The University is committed to providing staff with access to education and training in relation to the requirements of this Code. Where uncertain about the Code's application or interpretation, staff should consult with their immediate supervisor.
- Failure to comply with the Code may lead to disciplinary action, and in serious cases may lead to termination of employment and/or criminal prosecution.

LEARNERS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1.0 Introduction

The Open University is committed to providing its learner with a learning experience of highest quality. However, it may happen that learners may feel aggrieved by the services provided and may raise concerns about the quality of the learning experience being provided to them. This document sets out the process to be followed for formulating complaints. A complaint may be of technical, academic, administrative or of general nature and would, consequently, be addressed differently.

2.0 When to formulate a complaint?

Complaints are normally not entertained, when established procedures exist, for instance, Academic Appeal. In such cases, learners should use the established procedures which are elaborated in the University Regulations. Therefore, the complaints procedure should not be used in the following cases:

- (a) The Academic Appeal process should be used for request to review results.
- (b) For request to review decision of the Academic Council in connection with a disciplinary case, a letter of appeal should be sent to the Registrar.

3.0 Who should formulate a complaint?

Complaints may be formulated by individual learners or by several learners who wish to make a joint complaint.

4.0 Before formulating a complaint

Learners should try to resolve their grievances informally first. This will normally provide the quickest solution and will avoid the formality of submitting a Complaint Form.

As a matter of principle:

- If the complaint concerns the computer lab, learners can talk to the Technician on duty.
- If the complaint is of administrative nature, learners can talk to the Registrar/Administrative Officer or his/her representative.
- If the complaint is of academic nature, learners can talk to:
 - the tutor or
 - the Programme Manager.
- If the complaint concerns the Learning Resource Centre, learners can talk to the Head or his/her representative.

5.0 Formulating a formal complaint

If the informal process explained in para.4 above did not resolve the grievance satisfactorily, learners may wish to inform the person(s) again about the situation. If learners reasonably believe that the matter would not improve, then they may lodge a formal complaint using the Learner Complaints Form. (Copies of the form are available in the Learners Admission Office). The Learner Complaints Form should be completed in order to provide information clearly on:

- The nature of the complaint with date(s) and time(s) and how the learner is being affected
- Any evidence which may be available to support the complaint
- Any action(s) the learner has taken, with date and time, to try resolving the complaint, either informally or formally.

For complaints of academic nature: Send the Form to the Director, Academic Affairs Division.
For any other complaints: Send the Form to the Registrar.

On receiving the complaint, a receipt of acknowledgement should be sent to the complainer, except if the complaint is anonymous.

6.0 Resolving the complaint

Once the complaint has been received by the Director, Academic Affairs or the Registrar, sufficient and reasonable time has to be allowed for addressing the issues raised. Depending on the complexity and sensitivity of the complaint, it might take a day to 2 weeks before any outcome is seen. While resolving the complaint, relevant staff should be involved and, if necessary, the learner may be called upon to provide further clarifications or any supplementary information which may be necessary.

If the grievance is found to be frivolous or vexatious, or no grounds or evidence can be found justifying the grievance, no further action would be taken and the complainer would be informed of same verbally or in writing, except if the complaint is anonymous. In any case, the learner should be kept informed of any progress made with respect to the complaint.

7.0 Word of caution

Learners should act responsibly when formulating complaints, and should ensure that their complaints are relevant to the affairs of the University and are not harmful, damaging and injurious.

In such cases, the complainer may be called upon to depose and may be subject to disciplinary measures by the University. Where required, the legislation of the country would be applied.



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