

Teachers' Manual

1 : Quality Assurance Guidelines in Open and Distance Learning

In this section, we will discuss the guidelines for , curriculum and pedagogy , and ensuring the quality of learning materials in various formats for open and distance learning mode.

In terms of **curriculum and pedagogy**, the curriculum objectives should be consistent with the mission of the Higher Educational Institution. The curriculum should be designed based on the University Grants Commission Model Curriculum and the Learning Outcome-based Curriculum Framework. It should provide learning experiences that allow for a diversity of methods and linkages to previous and subsequent stages of learning.

When crafting the **curriculum** for distance learning students, the foundational principles set forth by the institution's educational mission and the desired learning outcomes must be strongly embedded. This ensures that every course, session plan, and learning activity has a clear purpose, directly contributing to students' knowledge and skillset development. Engaging with these learning objectives from a distance, educators must meticulously design the curriculum to facilitate not just theoretical understanding but also application. This segues into the imperative to incorporate diversity and real-world application of skills in the learning journey. The curriculum should be relevant to national competency requirements, and there should be a description of the credit value of each module or unit in the course.

Recognizing and embracing the diversity of contexts from which our distance learning students are based is essential. Incorporating examples, case studies, and applications that are reflective of various real-world scenarios not only enhances the relevance of the curriculum but also promotes a richer understanding among students. Fostering a learning environment that values diverse perspectives and experiences is a cornerstone in our curriculum development strategy, enriching the educational experience for all students.

Our approach to **pedagogy** for distance learning students must be comprehensive and transparent. It is vital to clearly outline the teaching and learning methods employed for each module or segment of our education strategy. Underlining the intended outcomes of each learning activity and how these activities contribute to the overall learning objectives ensures that students are aware of their educational journey's direction.

In line with acknowledging and catering to **diverse learning styles** and preferences, distance educators are encouraged to cultivate a diverse range of teaching methods. From live and recorded lectures to interactive simulations, discussion forums, and group projects, the tools and activities used must be varied to engage students effectively. This not only ensures content retention but also fosters a more dynamic and enriching educational experience.

As an educator in the field of Open and distance learning, it is important to ensure that the **self-learning materials** provided to students are of high quality and meet certain standards. To ensure the quality of printed learning materials, they should be structured based on the **Learning Outcome based Curriculum Framework (LOCF)**. They should consider the learners' prior knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The level and style of presentation and language should be simple and appropriate to aid in self-learning

Audio and video materials should supplement and complement the self-learning materials.. The content should be interactive, using graphics, animations, and simulations to keep the learners engaged. It should also provide continuity and coherence within and between study sessions.

When it comes to **online and computer-based materials**, they should not be merely scanned files of the self-learning materials. They should be easily accessible, easy to navigate, and searchable through metadata. It is important to ensure that digital content is Unicode compliant, especially for learners using Indian languages. The content should be accessible to all, including learners with disabilities, and should be available across different platforms and devices.

To ensure the quality of learning materials, it is important to have a clear methodology for **assessment and evaluation**. The content should be reliable and justify the learning outcomes. There should be clear definitions of intended learning outcomes, benchmarked to identifiable stages of learning. This manual provides a comprehensive set of guidelines, enabling teachers to deliver high-quality education through open and distance learning programs. By following these instructions, educators can contribute significantly to the educational experience and success of learners in diverse settings.

Equally important is the method by which we measure and evaluate student learning. As we engage with students on a broader spectrum of learning styles and preferences, our evaluation methodologies should be flexible, reflective, and accommodating. This could involve a mix of quizzes, projects, essays, and even oral examinations to cater to the various strengths of our students, providing a more accurate assessment of their learning and progress.

2 Checklist for ODL Teachers

Curriculum Development

- [] Verify alignment of the curriculum with learning outcome frameworks.
- [] Ensure that the curriculum provides a variety of learning experiences and addresses real-world applications of skills.

Pedagogical Strategies

- [] Clearly outline teaching and learning methods, intended outcomes, and assessment and evaluation methodologies.
- [] Implement a diverse range of teaching methods to accommodate different learning styles.
- [] Provide clear guidelines and support for learners on online netiquette and academic integrity.

Learning Materials Design

- [] Understand the target learner profile and customize learning materials accordingly.
- [] Develop clear and measurable learning objectives for each module or unit.
- [] Create content that encourages interaction, engages higher-order thinking, and provides opportunities for application of knowledge and skills.

Learning Materials in Print Media

- [] Structure learning material is based on the Learning Outcome Based Curriculum Framework (LOCF).
- [] Ensure the content is designed for two-way communication—interactive and engaging.
- [] Verify that the learning material is self-explanatory, self-contained, self-directed, self-motivating, and self-evaluating.

Audio-Video Materials

- [] Confirm that audio-video materials complement and align with the print media learning materials.
- [] Ensure accessibility and compatibility across multiple platforms and devices.



Online and Computer-Based Materials

- [] Check that digital content is not just scanned material and is easily navigable and searchable.
- [] Validate the digital content accessibility, specifically for learners with disabilities.
- [] Consider the file size and format to ensure materials are easily downloadable and accessible.

Curriculum Alignment and Delivery

- [] Regularly review the curriculum to ensure it remains relevant and up-to-date.
- [] Implement pedagogical strategies that actively engage learners and foster collaboration.
- [] Design assessments that align with learning objectives and provide meaningful, actionable feedback.

Best Practices and Continuous Improvement

- [] Establish a feedback mechanism to gather input from learners and improve the quality of learning materials and curriculum.
- [] Engage in ongoing professional development to enhance teaching practices and stay current with best practices.

3 Teacher's Manual for Self-Learning Materials (SLM) Creation

1. Introduction to Self-Learning Materials (SLM)

- **Definition and purpose** : Self Learning Materials (SLM) are learning materials that are self-explanatory, self-contained, self-directed, self-motivating, and self-evaluating. They provide a complete course description, comprising an overview of units, objectives, activities, assignments, and additional resources. The structure of the material should include a clear concept or learning map for the learner, enabling them to be self-directed in their studies.

- **Characteristics of effective SLM** : SLMs are self-explanatory, self-contained, self-directed, self-motivating, and self-evaluating. The content should be presented in an interactive, conversational format, with a dialogue and personal system of writing method. This will create interactivity in the self-learning materials and involve the learner actively through various experience-based activities and assignments.

- **Importance in a distance learning environment** : The SLM should provide an environment for practice at the learner's own pace and in their own time. It should also include clear guidelines on academic integrity and netiquette expectations.

2. Guidelines to create SLMs

Understand the Course Requirements : Read the syllabus and learning outcomes of the course. This document will be given to you by the Programme Coordinator or Deputy Registrar – Academic Operations. Write an overview of the course. Using mind-mapping techniques, break down the syllabus into manageable units. Keep in mind the profile of the distance and online learners.

Structuring the SLM: Next stage is unitization. Divide the course into 8-12 chapters based on the syllabus and the credits. Write the chapters and units definition. Follow the norms given by UGC in its 2020 regulations (See Table 1 below).

Guidelines for Each Unit: Define the Objectives of the unit, Write or curate theoretical content. Make sure you follow referencing rules and attribute the source of materials taken, wherever needed. OER and Creative Commons Licence materials can be used. Include the following to make your SLM interactive, conversational format : Practical exercises, Case studies, Real-life business scenarios, Assignments and self-assessment questions, Additional resources

Techniques to make the SLM self-contained and easy to follow: Utilize clear and structured content organization with logical flow. Use headings, bullet points, and visual aids to highlight key concepts and aid in comprehension.

Strategies for enhancing interactivity and engagement in SLM : Consider incorporating quizzes, or discussion prompts to encourage active participation and critical thinking. Utilize case studies and real-life examples to make the material relatable and engaging.

Tools and technologies for a multimedia-rich experience : Explore the use of multimedia tools such as videos, animations, and infographics to present content in diverse and engaging formats. Interactive whiteboards, online collaboration platforms, and educational apps can further enhance the learning experience.

Creating an environment for practice at the learner's pace and time: Offer self-assessment opportunities, access to additional resources, and provide flexibility in deadlines to accommodate varied learning styles and paces. Tools like learning management systems with adaptive learning features can assist in this regard.

Table1: Norms for delivery of courses through open and distance mode

S. No.	Credit Value of the course	Size of SLMs Range (in terms of units, to be divided into blocks)	No. of Assignments	Practical Sessions	No. of Counselling Sessions Theory (10 percent of total study Hours)	Study hours of Learner
1.	2 Credits	6-10 units	1	60 hours	6 hours	60 hours
2.	4 credits	14-20 units	2	120 hours	12 hours	120 hours
3.	6 credits	20-28 units	3	180 hours	18 hours	180 hours
4.	8 credits	30-34 units	4	240 hours	24 hours	240 hours