National Open University of Nigeria

Policy Title	NOUN Policy on Staff Training and Development
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Approved By:	The University Senate
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1.0   Introduction

Training typically refers to structured educational programmes designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, and competencies of employees. Training activities may include degree programmes, short courses (online or in-person), workshops, seminars, conferences, and hands-on practical exercises aimed at supporting the vision and mission of the university and promoting the success and well-being of its staff. The Directorate of Staff Training and Development is shouldered with the responsibility of training staff in National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) under the directive of the Vice-Chancellor.

Training aims to support the vision and mission of the institution by fostering continuous learning, promoting excellence in teaching and research, ensuring compliance with policies and regulations, and enhancing the overall effectiveness and well-being of the university community.

2.0   Purpose

The purpose of training is to support the professional growth, performance, and success of the University staff while advancing the University's vision, mission, goals, and objectives. The purpose includes:

2.1   Skill Development: NOUN train its staff to continuously enhance their skills to meet the changing needs in their work schedules.

2.2   Professional Development: To make staff stay updated in their chosen professions and for effective delivery, NOUN provides opportunity for all staff in the university to develop themselves in their respective professions.

2.3   Enhanced Performance: NOUN invest in staff training to enhance staff job performance.

2.4   Adaptation to Change: Training programs will assist NOUN staff in adapting to changes in technology, regulations, policies, and institutional priorities.

2.5   Promotion of Institutional Values: Training of NOUN staff would help to promote a culture of excellence, integrity, diversity, and inclusion. It would align individuals' actions and behaviours with the institution's overarching goals and commitments.

2.6   Compliance and Risk Management: Through training, NOUN staff will be well informed about the relevant laws, regulations, and how academic and operational activities are carried out.

2.7   Student Success: Training programs for faculty and staff will directly impact student success by improving the quality of teaching, advising, support services, and overall learning experience. Well-trained faculty and staff contribute to positive student outcomes, retention, and satisfaction.

2.8   Innovation and Research Excellence: Training will foster an environment conducive for innovation and research excellence by equipping faculty and researchers with the skills and resources needed to pursue cutting-edge research, secure grants, and disseminate findings effectively.

3.0   Scope

The scope of training is broad and encompasses various areas relevant to the academic, administration, professional, and personal development of staff. Here are some key types of training that would be covered in National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN):

3.1   Academic Training: This includes training programs aimed at enhancing teaching and learning methodologies, curriculum development, assessment techniques, academic advising, and classroom management. It also covers training on specific academic disciplines, research methodologies, and scholarly writing.

3.2   Professional Development: Training in this domain focuses on building skills and competencies related to specific job roles and responsibilities within the university. It includes training on administrative procedures, project management, leadership development, communication skills, conflict resolution, and rendering services to students.

3.3   Technology Training: Given the increasing reliance on technology in higher education more in ODL institution, training programmes cover a wide range of technological tools and platforms used for teaching, research, administration, and communication. This includes training on learning management systems, academic software, productivity tools, data analysis software, cybersecurity best practices, and the like.

3.4   Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training: Training initiatives in this area aim to promote a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the university

community. It includes awareness-building workshops, sensitivity training, and strategies for creating inclusive learning and work environments.

3.5   Research Training: The University provides training in research methodologies, grant writing, publication ethics, and responsible conduct of research. This supports the development of research skills and fosters a culture of research excellence.

3.6   Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning: The University offers opportunities for continuing education and lifelong learning through non-degree programs, workshops, seminars, conferences, and certificate courses. These programs cater to the professional development needs of individuals seeking to update their skills or explore new areas of interest.

4.0   Definition

Training refers to structured educational programs and activities designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, competencies, and professional development of employees. These programs are tailored to address specific needs and objectives, ranging from academic and research-related skills to administrative procedures, technological tools, and personal development areas.

5.0   Principles

The principles guiding philosophies and values shape the design, delivery, and evaluation of training programs in the university, contributing to the holistic development and success of staff, and the university at large.

5.1   Lifelong Learning: NOUN emphasises the importance of continuous learning and professional development for faculty, staff, and students throughout their academic and professional careers.

5.2   Student-Centeredness: NOUN prioritises the needs and success of students by providing training programmes that enhance teaching effectiveness, student support services, and the overall student experience.

5.3   Excellence and Innovation: Striving for excellence in all aspects of training, fostering a culture of innovation, creativity, and continuous improvement to meet the evolving needs of NOUN community.

5.4   Diversity and Inclusion: Promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion by offering training programs that raise awareness of cultural differences, biases, and social justice issues, and by creating inclusive learning and work environments.

5.5   Academic Integrity: NOUN upholds high standards of academic integrity, ethical conduct, and professionalism in all training activities, reinforcing the importance of honesty, integrity, and respect for intellectual property.

5.6   Collaboration and Collegiality: Encouraging collaboration, teamwork, and interdisciplinary approaches to training, fostering a sense of community and mutual support among NOUN staff.

5.7   Adaptability and Flexibility: NOUN recognises the dynamic nature of higher education and the diverse needs of learners, adapting training programs to accommodate different learning styles, preferences, and emerging trends.

5.8   Research and Evidence-Based Practice: Incorporating research findings, best practices, and evidence-based approaches into training programs, ensuring that training initiatives in NOUN are grounded in sound pedagogical principles and empirical evidence.

5.9   Community Engagement and Service: NOUN engages with the broader community through outreach programs, comprehensive reach, advocacy, service-learning opportunities, and training initiatives that address societal challenges and promote social responsibility.

6.0   Policy Statements

This policy underscores the university's commitment to investing in its human capital and cultivating a culture of lifelong learning and continuous improvement. Through strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation of training initiatives, the university aims to enhance the skills, performance, and overall effectiveness of its staff, thereby advancing its vision and mission of academic excellence and service to society.

6.1   On assumption of duty, Academic Staff employed with Master's degree must pursue a Ph.D. programme in the relevant field of study.

6.2   Deserving and qualified administrative and technical staff employed with first degree may be granted sponsorship to pursue higher degrees relevant to their schedule of duties.

6.3   Deserving and qualified staff may be sponsored to attend seminars, workshops, conferences and short courses to benefit from experts and group discussions in areas relevant to their schedule of duties.

6.4   NOUN shall put in place a staff Development Scheme to cater for the training and retraining of staff. Sponsorship to seminars, workshops, colloquia and refresher courses shall also be covered under the Staff Development Scheme.

6.5   No staff shall be allowed to go for sponsorship training other than in-house Workshop/Seminar/Conference until after confirmation.

6.6   Staff are not entitled to more than one external training/conference/workshop within 2 years except academic staff who have evidence of paper presentation.

6.7 In-house training and development programmes such as seminars, workshops, Departmental meetings shall be organized for the purpose of staff development.

6.8 Senior academic and non-teaching staff of the rank of Senior Lecturer and Principal Assistant Registrar and above may be granted sabbatical leave to update their academic and professional knowledge.

6.9 The University may not train staff for first degree programmes, but for professional non-degree programmes relevant to their nature of duty parts of staff development are as stated in Section five of the Rules and Regulations Governing the Condition of Service of Senior Staff, National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN).

6.10 In as much as Management of the University would want to sponsor staff for postgraduate programmes, sponsorship to undergo programmes in Open and Distance Learning Institutions shall be given preference.

6.11 Where a course of study is available in NOUN, staff would not be sponsored to other universities.

6.12 An officer on Staff Development shall ensure that his/her supervisor forwards annual progress report on him/her to the University. Such a report shall be considered by the Senate Research and Publications Committee and shall be a condition for subsequent release of funds from the scheme to the staff concerned.

6.13 Any staff granted approval for training, either with full sponsorship or payment of monthly salary must return to the University to serve for a period not less than the period of training or as specified in the Bond form before exiting or seeking another opportunity for training/Leave of Absence.

6.14 Any staff granted approval for training must complete relevant bond forms to be collected from the Registrar's office.

7.0 Policy Implementation

Implementing the Policy on Training in the University shall involve several steps to ensure successful execution and alignment with university's goals and objectives. The University can effectively implement the policy and cultivate a culture of lifelong learning, professional development, and excellence among its staff.

7.1 The Directorate of Staff Training and Development shall collate all training needs in the various directorates and units and identify the relevant trainers that would help to train staff to meet the training needs.

7.2 The Directorate of Staff Training and Development shall prepare annual schedule for training and present for management approval along with the required budget.

7.3   The training schedule should clearly indicate the type of training, the training sourced, the impact the training would have on the university vision, mission, objectives, and core value towards the growth and development of the university.

7.4   There must be transparency in the call for training, sourcing for trainers, feedback mechanisms, and the budgetary system.

7.5   The Directorate of Staff Training and Development must have a published annual report on staff training which must include evidence of the training outcomes on the university.

8.0   Sanctions of Violating this Policy

Sanctions for violating this policy in the university shall be designed to promote compliance, accountability, and the integrity of the training process. Here are some potential sanctions that could be meted out:

8.1   Verbal Warning: A verbal warning may be issued for minor or first-time violations of the policy. This serves as an initial reminder to the individual about their responsibilities under the policy and the importance of compliance.

8.2   Written Reprimand: For more serious or repeated violations, a written reprimand may be issued. This formal notification documents the violation and outlines the consequences of further non-compliance.

8.3   Probation: Individuals who continue to violate the policy may be placed on probation, during which their participation in certain training programs or activities may be restricted. Probationary periods typically include specific conditions that must be met for reinstatement of full privileges.

8.4   Withholding of Benefits: Individuals found in violation of the policy may have certain benefits, such as access to professional development funds, withheld for a designated period because of their actions.

8.5   Training Requirement: As a corrective measure, individuals who violate the policy may be required to complete additional training or education related to the areas in which they failed to comply. This ensures that they understand their obligations and responsibilities under the policy.

8.6   Loss of Privileges: Individuals who repeatedly violate the policy or engage in egregious misconduct may face the loss of certain privileges within the university community, such as access to training resources, participation in leadership roles, or eligibility for promotions or awards.

8.7   Exclusions from Sanctions of Violating this Policy.

Exclusions from sanctions for violating the Policy in the university could be considered in certain circumstances where there are mitigating factors or

legitimate reasons for non-compliance. These exclusions aim to ensure fairness, flexibility, and the recognition of individual circumstances.

University shall establish clear criteria and procedures for granting exclusions from sanctions, ensuring consistency, fairness, and transparency in the application of the training. Additionally, individuals seeking exemptions should be required to provide documentation or justification for their requests, and decisions should be made based on objective criteria and in accordance with university policies and guidelines. Here, are some potential exclusions:

8.7.1 Medical or Personal Emergencies: Individuals may be excluded from sanctions if they can demonstrate that their failure to comply with the training policy was due to a medical emergency, personal crisis, or other extenuating circumstances beyond their control.

8.7.2. Approved Leave of Absence: Individuals on approved leave of absence, such as sabbatical, medical leave, or parental leave, may be excluded from training requirements during their absence from the university.

8.7.3 Faculty Sabbaticals or Research Assignments: Faculty members engaged in approved sabbatical or research assignments that require them to be away from campus for an extended period may be exempt from certain training obligations during their absence, provided that alternative arrangements are made for fulfilling those requirements.

8.7.4 Waivers or Exceptions: Individuals may be granted waivers or exceptions from certain training requirements if they can demonstrate that they possess equivalent qualifications, skills, or experiences that fulfil the objectives of the training policy. Such waivers or exceptions should be approved through a formal process and documented accordingly.

8.7.5 Temporary Staff or Contractors: Temporary staff, contractors, or individuals employed on short-term assignments may be exempted from certain training requirements if their tenure with the university is limited or if their roles do not necessitate the same level of training as regular employees.

8.7.6 Legal Exemptions: Individuals may be exempted from training requirements if compliance would violate applicable laws, regulations, or contractual obligations. In such cases, the university should ensure that alternative measures are in place to address the underlying objectives of the training policy.

9.0 Policy Alignment

This policy aligns with the:

9.1 Rules and Regulations Governing the Condition of Service of Senior Staff, National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN).

9.2 Public Service Rule

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