National Open University of Nigeria

Policy Title	Policy on Orientation for New Students
Policy No:	NQSA/POL/TEL/003
Owner:	National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)
Approved By:	The University Senate
Managers/Drivers:	Academic Registry in conjunction with the Directorate of Learner Support Services (DLSS)
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1.0 Introduction

To make the learning journey in NOUN easy for new students, the university shall organise one week orientation where they will be introduced to the various activities and sections of the university. During this process, the students will be able to ask questions and get clarifications to gain more understanding about the operations in the university. This is the first important step of a new student in becoming a member of the university community.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate a positive orientation and transition to ensure a successful integration of new students into learning in an open and distance university and how they would

gain the most and enjoy the flexibility in the academic, social, and geographical community in the university.

3.0   Scope

This policy applies to all university stakeholders who are involved in the orientation and transition process of new students who are enrolled in NOUN for degree programmes. This includes undergraduates, graduates, and postgraduates.

Definitions

4.1   Administration:

It is he activities of running the university: These activities are stratified and headed by staff in the management cadre. The major administrative cadres are the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Registrar, Bursar, Libarian, Deans, Heads of Department, Directors, and Heads of Unit.

4.2   Academic:

The word academic could mean scholarship which relates to education. It can also be used to refer to someone who has interest or excelling in scholarly pursuits. It could mean a teacher/lecturer in a university.

4.3   Programme:

This refers to a set of courses that a student will take to earn a degree. A programme is made up of courses and each attributes a unit value. An award is earned at the successful completion of the required courses in an academic programme. For example, a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry is a programme that consists of several courses such as Introductory Inorganic Chemistry, Introductory Organic Chemistry, Environmental Chemistry, and so on.

4.4   Academic Programme:
Academic programme is used to differentiate a degree you earned from a university from other programmes that are not academic in nature. For example, the government might have a programme tagged: Feed the Nation. Although it is a programme, it is not an academic programme.

4.5   Course:
This refers to a unit of teaching that lasts for one semester in an academic year. It is led by one or more lecturers or facilitators. A course is broken down into modules and units. Each unit of learning represents contact hour(s) of study.

4.6   Course Registration:
This refers to official indication and willingness to take a course in a semester. A student/learner cannot be enrolled into a course if he/she has not registered for the course. The institution determines the process for registration. There is beginning and end time for semester course registration.

4.7   Facilitation:
This refers to the guide students/learners receive in a course by an academic staff who is being referred to as facilitator in NOUN. The facilitator provides support for the learners' mastery of the course. Timetable is provided to guide this activity.

4.8   Facilitator:
A facilitator is an experienced person who provides academic support to learners in a course(s). In the university environment, a facilitator is an academic butcould have an assistant who is a professional. A facilitator encourages interactivity between the learners and the

course contents, among learners, social interactions, and support the learners in achieving the stated learning outcomes in a course.

4.9 Learner Support Services:
This is an individualised support services a learner receives towards a successful completion of his/her study. This service provides one-on-one support and can be provided for a wide range of issues a learner may be facing such as inability to register a course, inducement from staff, family issues, domestic violence, environmental challenges, skills development needs, facilitation support needs, missing scores, and the like.

4.10 Tutor Marked Assignments:
This refers to academic assignments or tests in a course as a semester progresses. The institution determines the number of Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs) to be taken in a semester. The TMAs scores form part of the final score in a course. The facilitator provides feedback on performance that will help the learners improve on the content mastery.

4.11 Communication:
This is a process of exchanging information between individuals. It can be done through speaking, writing, or using other mediums. In a university, there are channels of communication that must be adhered to with a view to achieving the desired goal.

4.12 Disciplinary Action:
This is a measure taken by the university to correct inappropriate behaviour of students/learners. Disciplinary actions can range from mild to severe. It all depends on the level of offence and what the institution's policy says about it.

Principles

5.1 NOUN is committed to providing adequate support to learners. This leads to excellent graduate performance in their various programmes.

5.2 NOUN recognises the diversity in the learners' academic backgrounds; technological skills; social and psychological status; and learning needs. Therefore, NOUN is committed to providing supports that would make learning interesting and easy for the learners.

5.3 At NOUN, learners are introduced to their learning and school environment before they start their academic journey. This helps the learners to easily adapt to learning in an open and distance environment and excel in their academic pursuits.

Policy Statements

6.1 NOUN shall give one week orientation to new students into the university before the commencement of academic work.

6.2 Orientation for fresh students shall be inclusive to reach the unreached and cater for all categories of learners irrespective of their learning disabilities.

6.3 The orientation of new students shall be driven with the use of modern technology to give opportunity to all new students to participate irrespective of time or place.

6.4 The mode of orientation for new students shall be blended/hybrid. The main orientation shall be virtual but the staff at the study centres will be available to receive students that need in-person clarification.

6.5   The one-week orientation shall run from 12.00 a.m. on Monday to 11.59 p.m. on Saturday.

6.6   The orientation for new students must be held at the beginning of every semester.

6.7   All orientation plans and approval must be ready two weeks prior to start date of the orientation.

6.8   The students shall be informed and be guided on the services they would receive from:
a.   Registry
b.   Faculty
c.   Department
d.   Bursary
e.   Directorate of Examination and Assessment
f.   Library
g.   Learner Support Services
h.   Study Centre

6.9   The students shall be well informed on:
a.   Course registration for new and returning students;
b.   Learning materials/Course materials; to include mode of collection;
c.   Facilitation;
d.   Assessment and evaluation;
e.   Student progression and withdrawal;
f.   How to seek redress;
g.   Communication channel in the university;
h.   Learning environment;
i.   School environment;
j.   The University Administrative Structure.

6.10 The orientation shall be made available in electronic format and embed in the student portal such that the student must

go through the orientation at his/her own time before he/she can assess the course work.

6.11 To ensure all students have equal information, the orientation shall be central.

6.12 The Thursday in the week of orientation shall be set aside for real time interaction within a stipulated time with the various faculties, departments, academic directorates and units.

Policy Implementation

7.1 The Academic Registry of the university shall work with the Directorate of Learner Support Services to plan the programme of activities.

7.2 The programme of activities shall be presented to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic who takes it to the Senate for approval.

7.3 Academic Registry shall send notice to new students to commence their orientation. The programme of activities will be sent with the notice to guide the students.

7.4 Following, the programme of activities, faculties, departments, Directorate of Learner Support Services (DLSS) and the concerned directorates, units, and sections of the university shall be available at designated time to interact with the students real time.

7.5 The Directorate of Learner Support Services shall ensure compliance.

Sanctions on Violating this Policy

Any staff that violates this policy shall be disciplined. The sanctions shall be any of the followings depending on the gravity of the violation:

8.1   3 months suspension without plea;

8.2   Shall be denied one promotion year;

8.3   Shall lose current administrative position e.g. Head of Department, Dean, Director, etc;

8.4   One grade demotion from his/her current status IF the staff is an administrative staff;

8.5   Six (6) months suspension without plea;

8.6   Shall receive a letter of warning. But where such a person has had three previous warnings in his/her file, this sanction should not be used.

Policy Alignment

This policy aligns with the following policies in the university:

9.1   Student Admission, Retention and Graduation Policy;

9.2   Policy on Academic Calendar;

9.3   Policy for Managing Facilitations, Authentic Assessments, and other academic services including payments;

9.4   NOUN Online Facilitation Policy;

9.5   NOUN Policy on Students' Assessment and Evaluation;

9.6   Staff and Student Exchange Policy;

9.7   Credit Transfer and Articulation Policy for New Students.

10.0 Team of Developers

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