



# National Open University of Nigeria

Policy Title	NOUN Virtual Learning Environment Policy
Policy No:	NQSA/POL/TEL/018
Owner:	National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)
Approved By:	The University Senate
Manager/Driver:	Directorate of Learning Content Management System (DLCMS)
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## 1.0 Introduction

Historically, NOUN has been at the vanguard of integrating technology in education, offering blended and online learning to students spread across Nigeria and beyond. NOUN has been a pioneer in adopting and integrating various e-learning systems, navigating through both proprietary and open-source platforms to enhance its educational delivery. Over the years, NOUN has engaged with diverse platforms such as ATutor, an adaptable open-source system, the Integrated Learning Management System (iLMS) and iLearn, both proprietary e-learning solutions, and most recently, Moodle eLearn, a widely acclaimed open-source platform.

It is against this backdrop that the E-Learning Environment Policy has been formulated. This policy aims to consolidate our past

efforts, address current challenges, and chart a clear path forward, ensuring that NOUN remains a beacon of excellence in e-learning within Nigeria and the broader African continent.

## 2.0 Purpose

This policy sets the framework for NOUN's e-learning environment, ensuring a consistent, intuitive, and impactful online learning experience for every student and faculty member.

## 3.0 Scope

This policy is limited to online learning environments where academic programmes in NOUN are being delivered. This includes short courses, undergraduate courses, and postgraduate courses.

## 4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 *E-Learning Environment*: The digital platforms and tools used to deliver, manage, and support online learning.
- 4.2 *Learning Management System (LMS)*: A digital platform designed to deliver, track, and manage educational courses and training programmes.
- 4.3 *Moodle*: An open-source LMS that offers tools for creating and delivering online courses, fostering interactive learning environments.

## **5.0 Principles**

### **5.1 Standardization**

NOUN's e-learning environment will ensure uniformity in course presentation, user interface, and functionality. This principle aims to provide a seamless learning experience for users, promoting ease of navigation and content consistency across all courses.

### **5.2 Accessibility**

Our e-learning environment will be committed to inclusivity. This means ensuring that every user, irrespective of technological proficiency, disabilities, or the devices they use, can access and benefit from the platform's features. We prioritize making content, tools, and resources universally accessible, adhering to global accessibility standards.

### **5.3 Security and Privacy**

NOUN places paramount importance on the safety and privacy of its users. Rigorous measures will be implemented to safeguard user data, protect against unauthorized access, and maintain the overall integrity of the online learning environment. Additionally, we will uphold transparency in our data practices, ensuring users are informed and have control over their personal information.

## **6.0 Policy Statements**

- 6.1 NOUN shall structure and foster an inclusive online learning environment that can take care of learners with different learning abilities and needs for all courses and programmes in NOUN.
- 6.2 NOUN shall be committed to having a learning environment that has ease of access and it is user friendly.
- 6.3 NOUN shall be committed to the training and providing support for the development and utilisation of the state-of-the-art learning environment.

## **7.0 Policy Implementation**

### **7.1 Structure of the Learning Environment**

#### **7.1.1 Course Format**

Every course hosted on the LMS will adhere to a cohesive structure, ensuring consistency and ease of navigation for learners. This includes:

- **Course Overview:** A concise introduction to the course's objectives, content, and expected learning outcomes.
- **Weekly Modules:** Organized segments that break down the course content into manageable weekly chunks, each with specific learning goals.

- **Assessments:** Clearly defined assignments and quizzes, aligned with the course objectives, to evaluate student understanding and progress
- **Discussion Forums:** Platforms for students to discuss course content, share insights, and seek clarifications.

### 7.1.2 Resources

To support the learning journey, each module will be equipped with:

- **Reading Materials:** Essential texts, articles, and papers that delve into the module's topics.
- **Multimedia Content:** Videos, slides, and audio recordings that provide diverse means of content delivery.
- **Supplementary Materials:** Additional resources for students seeking a deeper understanding or exploration of topics.

### 7.1.3 Interactivity

Recognizing the importance of active learning, courses will integrate:

- Quizzes: Periodic assessments to test knowledge retention and understanding.
- Polls: Quick surveys to gauge student opinions or check comprehension during lessons.
- Simulations: Virtual scenarios that allow students to apply their knowledge in simulated real-world contexts.
- Break-out session: A breakout session during synchronous facilitation can enhance the student learning experience.

#### **7.1.4 Collaboration**

To foster a sense of community and collaborative learning, the platform will feature:

- Discussion Forums: Spaces for students to engage in academic discussions, share perspectives, and learn from peers.
- Group Projects: Opportunities for students to collaborate on tasks, enhancing teamwork and collective problem-solving skills.
- Workshops: Interactive sessions where students can collaboratively explore topics, engage in peer reviews, or work on group assignments.

## **7.2 Usage of the LMS**

### **7.2.1 Access**

- Individual Accounts: Both students and faculty will be provided with personalized accounts to access the LMS. These accounts will be tailored to specific access levels to ensure that users can access resources relevant to their roles.
- Authentication: Secure authentication methods will be in place to protect user accounts and maintain the integrity of user data.

### **7.2.2 Etiquette**

- Online Decorum: All users of the platform are expected to engage in interactions that are respectful, constructive, and aligned with NOUN's code of conduct.
- Content Sharing: Users should ensure that any content they share or post, be it resources, comments, or feedback, is accurate, relevant, and respects intellectual property rights.

### **7.2.3 Backup**

- Data Protection: To safeguard against any unforeseen events or system failures, regular backups of course content, user data, and other essential information will be conducted.

- **Recovery Protocols:** In the event of data loss, robust recovery protocols will be in place to restore the platform to its optimal state without significant disruption to users.

#### **7.2.4 Updates**

- **Platform Evolution:** The LMS will be continually monitored and updated to incorporate the latest features, enhancements, and security measures, ensuring a cutting-edge learning experience.
- **User Notification:** Before any major update, users will be notified and provided with resources or guidance to navigate any changes or new features.

### **7.3 Training and Support for the LMS**

#### **7.3.1 Orientation**

- **Introduction for New Users:** Upon joining NOUN, students and faculty will be offered a comprehensive orientation session to familiarize them with the LMS. This session will cover essential features, navigation techniques, and best practices to optimize their online learning and teaching experience.
- **Periodic Refresher Courses:** As the platform evolves or new features are added, refresher orientation sessions will be available to ensure all users stay updated.



### **7.3.2 Tutorials**

- **Resource Library:** A comprehensive repository of tutorials, guides, and FAQs will be maintained, allowing users to self-learn and troubleshoot common issues.
- **Interactive Webinars:** Periodic live tutorial sessions or webinars will be conducted, providing users with hands-on guidance and an opportunity to ask questions in real time.

### **7.3.3 Helpdesk**

- **Technical Support:** A dedicated team of technical experts will assist users with any challenges or queries they might have regarding the LMS.
- **Feedback Channel:** Users will have a platform to provide feedback, report bugs, or suggest improvements, ensuring the continuous refinement of the LMS experience based on real user insights.

## **7.4 Review and Feedback for the LMS**

### **7.4.1 Feedback Mechanism**

- **User-Centric Channels:** Multiple feedback channels such as online surveys, focus groups, and feedback forms, will be established, allowing users to share

their experiences, challenges, and suggestions regarding the LMS.

- **Timely Responses:** Feedback will be regularly reviewed, and users will receive acknowledgment or responses, ensuring they are heard, and their contributions valued.

#### **7.4.2 Continuous Improvement**

- **Feedback Analysis:** NOUN will systematically analyze the feedback to identify trends, areas of improvement, and user needs.
- **Iterative Development:** Based on feedback insights, the e-learning environment will undergo iterative improvements to enhance user experience, functionality, and content delivery.

#### **7.4.3 Evaluation**

- **Performance Metrics:** NOUN will employ metrics such as user engagement rates, course completion rates, and platform uptime to gauge the effectiveness of the LMS.

**7.4.4 External Audits:** Periodically, external experts may be invited to review and evaluate the LMS's performance, ensuring it aligns with international best practices and meets the evolving needs of online education.

## **8.0 Sanctions on Violating this Policy**

Any staff who violates the policy or hinders the successful implementation of the policy shall be handed over to the University Disciplinary Committee

## **9.0 Policy Alignment**

- 9.1 NOUN Blueprint
- 9.2 Getting to know your university.
- 9.3 NOUN Strategic Plans

## **Team of Developers**

1. Dr. Adewale Adesina
2. Professor Godwin Akper
3. Dr. Greg Onwodi
4. Mr. Adeyinka M. Adeboyejo
5. Mr. Sule Onuh
6. Mr. Olatunji Folami