



# National Open University of Nigeria

Policy Title	Policy on Administrative, Social and Academic Support Services
Policy No:	NQSA/POL/TEL/013
Owner:	National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)
Approved By:	The University Senate
Manager/Driver:	Academic Registry and Directorate of Learner Support Services
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## 1.0 Introduction

National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) is a single mode open and distance learning university that is committed to widening access to university education to everyone who wishes and qualifies to earn a degree in a university. NOUN students are diverse in culture, location, time and learning needs. To bridge this gap, NOUN in its blueprint (2002), structured a plan to provide adequate support services to all its learners without discrimination in such a way that each learner will receive maximum support to succeed in his/her learning.

## 2.0 Purpose

The aim of this policy is to provide:

- 2.1 guidance to students and staff on the type of support services available in NOUN.
- 2.2 a structure on how support services can be provided to achieve its desired goal.

## 3.0 Scope

The scope of this policy shall cover:

- 3.1 Administrative support services,
- 3.2 Social support services
- 3.3 Academic support services

## 4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 **Admission.** This refers to the act of processing and accepting someone who applied to a school as a student in the school.
- 4.2 **Registration.** This is a process of enrolling a student in a school, in an academic semester, and in a course. It is only after registration that the applicant can be described as a bona fide student in a school, in a semester, and in a course. The total number of registered students in a school or in a semester or in a course are those that make up the number

of enrolled students and they are the actual number of students the school has in a semester or in a course.

- 4.3 Study centre.** This is a physical location where learners are provided with physical spaces to study, access learning resources and interact with other students.
- 4.4 Counselling.** This is a service provided to help learners with emotional and psychological needs cope with personal and academic challenges.
- 4.5 Support services.** These are services provided by a school to support learners to achieve success in their studies. They are basically in three categories – administrative support, social support and academic support.
- 4.6 Administrative.** This refers to the management and coordination of different activities that support smooth functioning of a school or learning.
- 4.7 Social.** In this context, this refers to companionship among learners, the way and manner learners interact with each other, and relate. Social support for learners could be psychological support, mentoring, peer support, family support, and community support.
- 4.8 Academic.** This refers to anything that is scholarship.
- 4.9 Advisory services.** Provide guidance for learners on academic and non-academic matters such as course selection, fee payments, and personal development.

- 4.10 Digital Learning Environment.** This refers to the virtual space where learners learn. It is structured to allow access to digital learning resources and virtual interactions with other learners.
- 4.11 Psychosocial support.** This type of support provides educational, psychological, and social opportunities that support learners that are traumatised due to conflict or natural disaster.
- 4.12 Peer support.** This type of support is both academic and non-academic. This occurs where a learner supports co-learner in academic or administrative tasks or activities.
- 4.13 Family support.** In this type of support, a learner receives emotional, financial, and academic support from their family members.
- 4.14 Learning support services.** These services help learners improve on their academic performance by providing facilitation, learning infrastructure support such as free internet within the school environment including study centres, laboratories for hands-on practical.
- 4.15 Academic Advising.** This service provides learners guidance on academic issues such as course selection, degree requirements, and academic policies.
- 4.16 Mentoring.** This support provides learners with guidance, advice, and support from a mentor. The academic advisor and academic staff could provide this service.

- 4.17 Library services.** These services provide learners with access to learning resources such as books, journals, and databases.
- 4.18 Advertisement:** A public promotion or announcement to inform the general public about educational opportunities and requirements.
- 4.19 Distance learning:** A method of remote education that allows students to learn without attending physical classes.
- 4.20 Entry qualifications:** The academic prerequisites and standards required for programme admission.
- 4.21 First-degree requirements:** Academic criteria necessary for obtaining a bachelor's degree.
- 4.22 Flexible delivery:** An educational approach that adapts to individual learners' needs and preferences.
- 4.23 JAMB examinations:** Joint Admission and Matriculation Board examinations, often required for university admission in Nigeria.
- 4.24 National Certificate in Education (NCE):** A qualification that often includes coursework in education and is required for some programmes.
- 4.25 National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN):** A Nigerian university providing distance education.

- 4.26 NUC minimum requirements:** The minimum academic standards set by the National Universities Commission in Nigeria for degree programme admission.
- 4.27 OND Certificate:** A certificate awarded for completing an Ordinary National Diploma Programme, typically in technical or vocational fields.
- 4.28 HND Certificate:** A certificate awarded for completing a Higher National Diploma Programme, typically in technical or vocational fields.
- 4.29 Open education:** An inclusive approach to education that promotes accessibility for a wide range of individuals.
- 4.30 Qualifications:** Academic credentials and degrees earned upon programme completion.
- 4.31 SSCE, GCE, NABTEB, TC II:** Different types of educational examinations and qualifications, including Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE), General Certificate of Education (GCE), National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB), and Teachers' Certificate II (TC II).

## 5.0 Principles

NOUN is committed to providing the following services to its learners:

- 5.1 Administrative Support
  - 5.1.1. Admission Guidance
  - 5.1.2. Semester registration

- 5.1.3. Course registration
- 5.1.4. Distribution and collection of print course materials
- 5.1.5. Change of study centre
- 5.1.6. Change of programme
- 5.1.7. Record processing
- 5.1.8. Advisory services.
- 5.1.9. Student and Visitors Information Services
- 5.1.10. Generation, Storage, and Management of database

## 5.2 Social Support

- 5.2.1 Counselling
- 5.2.2 Study centres
- 5.2.3 Digital Learning Environment
- 5.2.4 Psychosocial support
- 5.2.5 Peer support
- 5.2.6 Family support
- 5.2.7 Community support

## 5.3 Academic Support Services:

- 5.3.1 Learning support services
- 5.3.2 Academic advising
- 5.3.3 Mentoring
- 5.3.4 Library services

## **6.0 Policy Statements**

- 6.1 Learners in NOUN shall be provided with adequate support in their learning.
- 6.2 NOUN shall provide administrative, social, and academic supports to all its learners without discrimination.

- 6.3 NOUN shall provide inclusive counselling system for its learners.
- 6.4 Technology shall be used to drive the support system given to learners.
- 6.5 NOUN learners shall gain from both in-person and remote support system.
- 6.6 NOUN shall establish a directorate that would be committed to coordinating learners' support in the university.
- 6.7 NOUN shall consider concessional admission.
- 6.8 The acceptable qualifications for admission into any NOUN academic programmes shall be those recognised by the National Universities Commission (NUC) and Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria.
- 6.9 Candidates with transferred credits shall be given appropriate placement in line with NOUN Policy on Credit Transfer and Articulation for New Students.
- 6.10 NOUN students can change their study centres but must be in line with the implementation guidelines and directives.



## 7.0 Policy Implementation

### 7.1 Administrative Support

#### 7.1.1 Admission Guidance

##### 1. Admission to Undergraduate Programmes:

- Entry qualifications vary by programme duration:
  - Four-year Programme: Requires minimum of five credits in SSCE, GCE 'O' Level, or five merits in NABTEB or TC II exams, including English Language and Mathematics at not more than two (2) sittings.
  - Three-year Programme: Requires NCE with merit pass in English Language and Mathematics, IJMB with at least two Credit passes in relevant subjects, or OND with a category with a minimum of Lower merit, along with five 'O' level papers at not more than two (2) sittings.
  - Two-year Programme: Requires an HND certificate with a minimum category of Lower Credit, along with five 'O' level papers at not more than two (2) sittings.
- 2. **Credit Transfer Policy:** NOUN allows credit transfer. See Policy on Credit Transfer and Articulation for New Students
- 3. **Concessionary Admission:** First-degree holders from recognized universities can apply for a Concessional Admission in related NOUN Programmes with a credit passes in English Language and Mathematics.

## 1. Admission to Postgraduate Studies:

Entry requirements for postgraduate vary by programmes:

- An applicant for Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) admission into NOUN is normally expected to have a HND with a minimum of Lower Credit or First Degree with a minimum of third class in a related field in addition to Five O'level Credits including English Language and Mathematics at not more than two (2) sittings.
- A Candidate seeking a Master degree programme admission into NOUN is normally expected to have a minimum of a First Degree with a Second Class (Lower Division) in a related field in addition to Five O'level Credits including English Language and Mathematics at not more than two (2) sittings. A waiver in O'level Mathematics might apply for some programmes.
- Master and PhD Programmes have specific eligibility criteria.
- Candidates seeking admission into PhD/MPhil programme are expected to have a CGPA not below 3.50 on a 5.00 scale in addition to a good Master degree in a relevant discipline from the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) or any university recognised by the Senate of NOUN. Candidates will be subjected to oral/written interviews.
- Applicants for admission into PhD programmes in NOUN must possess a good Master degree in a relevant discipline from the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) or any university recognised by the Senate of NOUN, with a CGPA not below 4.00 on a 5.00 scale. Some

departments may seek higher CGPA, while all Ph.D. candidates will be subjected to oral/written interviews.

- Candidates applying for PhD Law must possess Master of Laws (LLM) degree or MPhil from an approved university with a weighted average score which shall not be less than 60% or a minimum CGPA of 4.00 on a 5.00-point scale. Candidates will be subjected to oral/written interviews.

2. **Screening and Clearance:**

- Newly admitted students must undergo screening and document verification at designated study centres.
- This process ensures academic integrity and provides students with matriculation numbers for registration and studies.

NOUN's admission process prioritizes flexibility, inclusivity, and quality education through distance learning.

3. **Advertisement.** Academic registry should ensure proper placement of advertisement into all approved Senate Academic Programmes.

4. **Admission Procedure.** NOUN conducts its admission process online. Here are the steps:

- Visit the official website [www.nouonline.net](http://www.nouonline.net).
- On the Home Page, go to the Menu Bar and click on "Apply for Admission."
- Choose between Undergraduate or Postgraduate Programmes (other Programmes may be unavailable).
- Select the faculty.
- Fill in the displayed form.
- View the admission criteria.
- Click "Apply" to proceed.

- Note the UNIQUE ID displayed.
- Click the 'Continue' button.
- Select Bank Branch as the payment type.
- Click "Pay."
- Take the generated RRR number to any bank branch for payment.
- After payment, return to the website and follow steps 1-3.
- Click "Continue After Payment."
- Enter the UNIQUE ID, RRR number, and the chosen Programme.
- Click "Proceed."
- Fill in the form; all fields marked with a red star are compulsory.
- Click "Submit."
- Print the Admission Letter.
- Upload credentials for verification
- Visit your study centre for verification and screening.

### **7.1.2 Semester registration**

- i. DMIS shall provide guidance on mode of semester registration.
- ii. DMIS shall send prompt to the learners' portal to alert them of semester registration and its process.
- iii. The process of semester registration should be part of students' orientation.

### **7.1.3 Course registration**

- i. DMIS shall follow the submissions from departments and faculties to provide guidance on how students can do self-registration online without further assistance.

- ii. DMIS shall send prompt to learners' portal and emails to alert them of course registration.
- iii. All lower and failed courses must be registered first before the current semester courses. This should be automated.
- iv. A learner who completes his/her registration should be given immediate access to the courses in the LMS.

#### **7.1.4 Distribution and collection of print course materials**

- i. NOUN Press is to ensure that print course materials are available at the study centres before the commencement of a new semester.
- ii. NOUN Press should ensure that learners are able to track their course materials. Where course materials are not available at the time of collection, the learners must be notified when the materials are available.
- iii. Students shall be given option of choosing between print and digital course materials.

#### **7.1.5 Change of study centre**

1. **General:** As a matter of policy, both the institution (NOUN) and students will adhere to the following guidelines:
  - i. Students must submit a duly completed transfer form.
  - ii. Students are required to provide a course registration slip.

- iii. Students must make their application for a change of study centre not later than four weeks (4) before the commencement of examinations.
- iv. The Study Centre Director recommends to Academic Registry through the Directorate of Learner Support Services.
- v. The Academic Registry at NOUN will review the request to verify the student's eligibility for a study centre change.
- vi. NOUN will inform the students about the status of their request, if approved or not.

## **2. Roles of Students: The students;**

- i. must duly complete the transfer form, providing accurate information and adhering to the guidelines specified in the change of study centre form.
- ii. are responsible for submitting a course registration slip along with their duly completed transfer form to ensure that their records are accurately updated.
- iii. must adhere to the policy's application deadline, submitting their transfer request not later than four weeks before the commencement of examinations.
- iv. should keep acknowledged copy of their transfer request form and any communication from NOUN regarding the outcome of their application.

**3. Roles of the Study Centre:** The study centre will;

- i. receive and verify the completeness of the duly completed transfer form and the course registration slip submitted by the student.
- ii. ensure that applications for a change of study centre are made within the stipulated timeframe, which is not later than four weeks before the commencement of examinations.
- iii. ensure that all applications received are entered into the google form designed for capturing request for changed of study centre
- iv. forward daily the student's transfer request captured in google form to the Academic Registry through the Directorate of Learner Support Services for processing.

**4. Roles of NOUN's Academic Registry:** The Academic Registry will

- i. thoroughly review the transfer request to ensure that the student meets the eligibility criteria for a change of study centre.
- ii. If the student's request meets the eligibility criteria, the Academic Registry will proceed with the approval process.
- iii. The Academic Registry will inform the student about the status of their request directly and or through the Directorate of Learner Support Services and their study centres. If the request is approved, the student will be notified accordingly.

### **7.1.6 Change of Programme**

As a matter of policy, both the institution (NOUN) and students will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Students must submit a duly completed change of programme form with an affixed passport photograph.
2. Students are required to provide the following documents:
  - i. Admission Letter for the programme initially admitted;
  - ii. Evidence of payment for change of programme;
  - iii. Copy of the O'level result presented during admission; and
  - iv. Degree certificate (for postgraduate student) presented during admission.
3. Students must make their application for a change of programme not later than eight (8) weeks before the commencement of examinations.
4. The Study Centre Director recommends to the Head of Department through the Registrar.
5. The Head of Department at NOUN will review the request to verify the student's eligibility for a change of programme.
6. NOUN will inform the students about the status of their request, if approved or not.
7. All courses registered by student before the approval for change of programme that are not in the OPP/DPP of the new programme should be expunged from the student result and registration by DMIS and DEA



8. The Head of Department of the intending programme should specify the level student should be placed as part of their approval comment(s).
9. Role of Heads of Department. The Academic departments are the basic administrative units of the university and the main component parts of faculties for conducting teaching, research and community service within a specialized field of knowledge. A duly completed change of programme form shall be endorsed/approved by the Head of Department and forwarded to the Directorate of Academic Registry (DAR).
10. Roles of Students. The students:
  - i. must duly complete the change of programme form, providing accurate information and adhering to the guidelines specified in the change of programme form
  - ii. are responsible for submitting the following documents along with their duly completed change of programme form to ensure that their records are accurately updated:
    - Admission Letter for the programme initially admitted;
    - Evidence of payment for change of programme;
    - Copy of the O'level result presented during admission; and
    - Degree certificate (for postgraduate student) presented during admission.

- iii. must adhere to the policy's application deadline, submitting their change of programme request not later than eight (8) weeks before the commencement of examinations.
- iv. should keep acknowledged copy of their change of programme request form and any communication from NOUN regarding the outcome of their application.

11. Roles of the Study Centre. The study centre will:

- i. receive and verify the completeness of the duly completed change of programme form with an affixed passport photograph of the student and other documents submitted by the student as stated in this policy.
- ii. ensure that applications for a change of programme are made within the stipulated timeframe, which is not later than eight (8) weeks before the commencement of examinations.
- iii. ensure that all applications received are scanned to the Directorate of Academic Registry (DAR) daily for processing.

12. Roles of NOUN's Academic Registry. The Academic Registry will:

- i. thoroughly review the change of programme request to ensure that all the documents as stipulated in the policy are submitted by the study centre.

- ii. If the documents for the student's request meets the eligibility criteria, the Academic Registry will forward same to the Head of Department with a memo for the approval process.
  - iii. The Academic Registry will inform the student about the status of their request directly and or through the study centres. If the request is approved, the student will be notified accordingly.
  - iv. The Academic Registry will inform DMIS/DEA accordingly if the request is approved.
13. Roles of NOUN's Heads of Departments. The Heads of Departments will:
- i. thoroughly review the change of programme request to ensure that all the documents as stipulated in the policy are submitted by the Academic Registry.
  - ii. If the documents for the student's request meets the eligibility criteria, the Head of Department will endorse/approve by specifying the level the student should be placed with a memo to the Academic Registry.
14. Roles of NOUN's DMIS. The Directorate of Management Information System will:
- i. Change the student's programme in student's portal to reflect the new programme.
  - ii. Ensure that all courses registered by student before the request for change of

programme that are not related to the OPP/DPP of the new programme approved by the Head of Department should be expunged from the student result and registration portal.

15. Roles of NOUN's DEA. The Directorate of Examinations and Assessment will:
  - i. Change the student's programme in the result processing portal to reflect the new programme.
  - ii. Ensure that all courses registered by student before the request for change of programme that are not related to the OPP/DPP of the new programme approved by the Head of Department should be expunged from the student result and registration portal.

#### **7.1.7 Record processing.**

- i. Academic registry should create data base for all learners' activities, store and ensure easy retrieval.
- ii. For easy monitoring for compliance, academic registry should automate the implementation processes in this policy.

#### **7.1.8 Advisory services.**

The Heads of Department, course facilitators, and counsellors are to perform the advisory role in directing the learners on their course registrations, and academic progression.

### **7.1.9 Student and Visitors Information Services**

- i. NOUN Information Call Centre (NICC) shall respond to all enquires and complaints from the public and the learners. NICC should ensure that stakeholders are aware of the process of presenting complaints.
- ii. The learners shall be guided on how to use the E-Ticketing system in presenting complaints.

### **7.1.10 Generation, Storage, and Management of Database**

- i. Academic registry should work with DMIS to generate, store, and manage the database of all students' academic activities.
- ii. Learners and the relevant personnel should be given some level of access to view some information in the database.

## **7.2 Social Support**

The Directorate of Learner Support (DLSS) is to ensure the following services are adequately provided:

- 7.2.1 Counselling
- 7.2.2 Study centres
- 7.2.3 Digital Learning Environment
- 7.2.4 Psychosocial support
- 7.2.5 Peer support
- 7.2.6 Family support

### 7.2.7 Community support

## 7.3 Academic Support Services:

The Directorate of Learner Support Services (DLSS) is to ensure the following services are adequately provided:

7.3.1 Learning support services

7.3.2 Academic Advising

7.3.3 Mentoring

7.3.4 Library services

## 8.0 Sanctions on Violating this Policy

Any staff that violates this policy shall appear before the University Disciplinary Committee and shall be disciplined accordingly.

## 9.0 Policy Alignment

This policy aligns with:

9.1 Policy on Credit Transfer and Articulation for New Students

9.2 NOUN Open, Distance and eLearning Policy.

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