



National Open University of Nigeria

Policy Title	Policy on General Studies (GST)
Policy No:	NQSA/POL/TEL/025
Owner:	National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)
Approved By:	The University Senate
Manager/Driver:	Directorate for Entrepreneurship and General Studies
Date of Approval:	7 th October, 2024
Date of Next Review:	October 2027

1.0 Introduction

General Studies Courses (GST) constitute a foundational and integral part of academic programs in educational institutions worldwide. These courses are specifically designed to provide students with a broad and well-rounded education that extends beyond their chosen major or field of specialization.

Vision, Mission, and Objectives

Vision: To be recognized as a university that offers holistic education, extending beyond students' selected majors, and equipping them with a broad and diverse knowledge foundation.

Mission: To promote interdisciplinary learning and enhance communication and collaboration skills, enabling students to integrate knowledge from diverse fields and work effectively in varied contexts

Objectives: The primary objective of GST is to offer students a comprehensive understanding of various disciplines, encompassing subjects such as humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and technology. These courses serve as a bridge between specialized academic tracks, ensuring that students acquire not only in-depth knowledge within their chosen fields but also a broader perspective of the world.

Core Values

General Studies Courses (GST) cherish core values that underpin their educational mission. GST promotes a holistic and diverse education with an emphasis on comprehensive understanding. It acts as a bridge between specialized tracks, encouraging interdisciplinary growth. Effective communication, global perspective, and responsible citizenship are valued to contribute to society positively. Moreover, GST embraces adaptability to meet the evolving needs of students and the world, ensuring the continual relevance of its courses. These core values are the bedrock of GST's commitment to a well-rounded and dynamic educational experience.

2.0 Purpose

General Studies Courses (GST) serve the purpose of providing students with a well-rounded education that extends beyond their chosen major or field of specialization. The primary purpose of GST is to:

- i. equip students with comprehensive knowledge that encompasses various disciplines, fostering a broader perspective.
- ii. promote the integration of knowledge from diverse fields, encouraging students to recognize the interconnectedness of different subject areas.
- iii. develop students' communication and collaboration skills, enabling them to express ideas clearly and work effectively in varied contexts.
- iv. cultivate a global perspective, fostering understanding and respect for diverse cultures, perspectives, and global challenges.
- v. nurture responsible and ethical citizens who contribute positively to society academically and through their actions and values.
- vi. continually evolve to meet the changing needs of students and the demands of an ever-evolving world, ensuring the relevance and effectiveness of GST courses.

3.0 Scope

This policy is applicable to all undergraduate programmes. Postgraduate diplomas and master's degrees in the university.

4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 **Compulsory courses:** Mandatory subjects that students must complete as part of their academic programme.
- 4.2 **Course coordinators:** Individuals responsible for overseeing and managing specific academic courses, ensuring their quality and effectiveness.
- 4.3 **Course enrolment:** The process of registering for and officially joining specific courses within an academic programme.
- 4.4 **Course facilitation:** The act of providing guidance and support to students during their coursework, typically by instructors or facilitators.
- 4.5 **Curriculum:** The set of courses, subjects, and learning objectives that make up an educational programme.
- 4.6 **Direct-Entry Students:** Students who enter a programme or institution at an advanced level, often with prior educational or work experience.
- 4.7 **Distance Learner:** An individual who pursues education remotely, often through online courses and virtual platforms.
- 4.8 **E-examinations:** Examinations conducted electronically, typically through digital platforms and devices.
- 4.9 **Examination structure:** The format and components of an assessment or examination, including the types of questions and assessment methods.

- 4.10 **Exemption policy:** Guidelines and criteria for granting exceptions or relief from certain academic requirements or courses.
- 4.11 **General Studies Courses (GST):** Mandatory courses that provide a broad educational foundation beyond students' chosen majors.
- 4.12 **Graduate Students:** Individuals pursuing advanced degrees, such as master or doctoral degrees, after completing their undergraduate studies.
- 4.13 **Master students:** Students enrolled in master's degree programmes, typically specializing in a specific field of study.
- 4.14 **Nigerian universities:** Educational institutions located in Nigeria offering a range of academic programmes.
- 4.15 **Post Graduate Diploma:** An advanced qualification obtained after a bachelor's degree, preparing students for specific careers or further studies.
- 4.16 **Practical assessments:** Evaluations that test students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world situations.
- 4.17 **Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs):** These are academic tasks or assessments that students complete as part of their coursework, which are then evaluated and marked by their course tutors or instructors.
- 4.18 **Undergraduate students:** Individuals pursuing their first degree in higher education, typically a bachelor's degree.

5.0 Principles

- 5.1 It is mandatory for all undergraduate students in Nigeria universities to take General Studies (GST) courses and they are required for graduation.
- 5.2 GST courses are selected to guide learners on culture, values, communication, technology, co-existence, and entrepreneurship.
- 5.3 GST courses are mainly for 100 and 200 levels except for entrepreneurship that is taken at first semester of 300 level.

6.0 Policy Statements

National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) will:

- 6.1 ensure that GST courses offer a comprehensive understanding of various disciplines, including humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and technology, to provide students with a well-rounded education.
- 6.2 actively promote interdisciplinary learning within GST by encouraging the integration of knowledge from diverse fields to help students recognize the interconnectedness of different subject areas.
- 6.3 cultivate critical thinking skills among students through GST, ensuring that they can analyse complex issues, make informed decisions, and adapt to an ever-changing world.

- 6.4 emphasize the development of effective communication skills in GST, enabling students to express their ideas clearly and persuasively, fostering effective collaboration in diverse contexts.
- 6.5 aim to graduate individuals who are not only academically proficient but also responsible and ethical citizens through GST, capable of contributing positively to society.
- 6.6 be committed to adapting GST to meet the changing needs of students and the evolving world, ensuring the continued relevance and effectiveness of the courses.
- 6.7 maintain clear and transparent policies and guidelines regarding GST, making it easy for students to understand the requirements and expectations.
- 6.8 encourage feedback from students and faculty to continuously improve GST courses and their delivery.
- 6.9 ensure that all students, regardless of their programme or major, have equal access to GST courses, maintaining a level playing field in their education.
- 6.10 implement mechanisms for quality assurance, including regular course reviews, assessments, and feedback loops, to enhance the effectiveness of GST.

- 6.11 make GST courses accessible to distance learners and consider flexible scheduling to accommodate various student needs

7.0 Policy Implementation

7.1 GST courses

To meet the stated objectives, undergraduate students are required to take general study courses in line with senate and NUC approved guidelines.

7.2 General Studies Course Enrollment

7.2.1 Course Selection:

Art, Education (Arts, Social Science, and Foundation) programmes should enrol in GST courses with a science focus. Conversely, Science programmes, including Science Education, should enroll in GST courses with arts focus.

7.2.2 Course Facilitation:

- All general studies courses are facilitated and actively supported.

7.2.3 Examination Format:

- All GST course examinations are conducted electronically, except for GST302.

- GST302 includes a combination of 40% e-examination and 60% practical assessment through a business plan presentation and enterprise development.

7.2.4 Direct-Entry Students:

- All direct-entry students must complete NOU107 in addition to their 200-level GST courses.
- Direct-entry students at the 300 level are only required to complete NOU107 and GST302.

7.2.5 Graduate Students:

- Graduate students who have completed their studies at NOUN are exempted from NOU707/807/907

7.3 General Studies Course Coordination Structure and Timelines

7.3.1 Course Coordinator Nominations:

- DE&GS shall request faculty deans to nominate course coordinators for GST courses as part of their academic responsibilities.

7.3.2 Course Facilitation:

- Course coordinators will primarily facilitate their assigned GST courses.

- External facilitators will be sought, when necessary, particularly for courses with high demand.

7.3.3. Quality Management:

- Course coordinators shall be responsible for ensuring the quality of GST courses.
- They will develop test items for both Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs) and examinations.

7.3.4 Course Improvement:

- Coordinators will suggest ways to enhance the GST courses, ensuring continuous improvement.
- They will identify gaps in course materials and recommend enhancements to the course material review process.

7.3.5 Review of Course Materials:

- Coordinators may potentially review the course materials to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

7.3.6. Follow-Up and Reports:

- Continuous follow-up is recommended to prevent recurrence of issues and enhance course quality.
- Coordinators are expected to submit facilitation reports to the Directorate of Learning Content Management System (DLCMS) for assessment.

7.3.7 Assessment

GST courses will follow a standardized grading structure, where Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs) carry a weight of 30% in the final grade, while final exams contribute 70%. Notably, GST302 deviates from this norm, with TMAs accounting for 60% and the final exam for 40% of the final grade. It is crucial that the final GST course grade accurately represents the combined TMA and exam scores. In situations where only one component is fulfilled, the final assessment will be considered incomplete, necessitating a mandatory retake of both the TMA and exam in the subsequent semester.

8.0 Sanctions on Violating this Policy

- 8.1 Any student who violates the policy may not be able to graduate as and when due.
- 8.2 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

<https://deags.nou.edu.ng/ceags/degs-framework/>
<https://nuc-ccmas.ng/>

Team of Developers

1. Dr. Samuel Awolumate
2. Dr. Ohadiugha Marian Nwakaego
3. Mr. Ayonote, W. Elenode
4. Mr. Tyokagher Joseph