



National Open University of Nigeria

Policy Title	Policy on Invalidation and Replacement of Certificates
Policy No:	NQSA/POL/TEL/022
Owner:	National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)
Approved By:	The University Senate
Manager/Driver:	Registrar: Academic Registry
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1.0 Introduction

The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) as a higher institution shall as authorised by enabling law, award degrees and diploma certificates to undergraduate and post graduate students who met the requirements for the award of such certificates both in learning and character. The information on the certificates does not include details of courses, scores, and the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of awardees.

The certificates shall contain the following information:

- i. date of award of degree,
- ii. name of student receiving the award,
- iii. type of award; degree, diploma and class of degree (where necessary).

2.0 Purpose

Certificates that are issued by universities are proof of the granting of an award on academic performance and good character. In case of loss and destruction or (invalidation as the case may be) a replacement shall be issued at the discretion of the university in the form of a “Certified True Copy “to affirm the information on the original copy and serve the same purpose.

3.0 Scope

This policy will apply to certificate courses, diploma programmes, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 Certificate means an official document attesting a fact.
- 4.2 Award means confer or bestow as being deserved or merited.
- 4.3 Character means mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual.
- 4.4 Credibility means quality of being trusted and believed in.

5.0 Principles

- 5.1 In NOUN, learners are to be awarded degrees and certificates at the completion of all required courses and have earned the required credit units for graduation. In addition, the learners must be worthy in character and learning.

5.2 NOUN shall be responsible for every certificate issued to graduates of the university.

6.0 Policy Statements

6.1 Invalidation:

A student's certificate shall be invalidated if:

- 6.1.1 he/she enrolls for more than one programme and runs them concurrently.
- 6.1.2 there was non-adherence to degree rules and found that he/she graduated prematurely.
- 6.1.3 the student has not spent the required number of semesters for graduation in the programme.
- 6.1.4 in error the university awarded degrees and issued certificates to students who were expelled or sanctioned by NOUN as a result of examination misconduct or other forms of misconduct which hitherto, was possible because there had been no means to readily identifying such students due to change of Study Centre or change of programme of study.

6.2 Replacement:

A student's certificate shall be replaced with "Certified True Copy" where:

- 6.2.1 the student's name was wrongly spelt by the Officer in Charge.

6.2.2 programme of study, class of degree and year of graduation were wrongly stated on the Original Certificate.

6.2.3 the university's extant rules on the number of acceptable names to be printed on certificates as well as initialled names were violated.

6.3 The university shall reserve the right to recall and invalidate a certificate already issued.

6.4 In the case of administrative error, as in 6.2, a corrected copy shall be issued.

6.5 Responsibility:

The Academic Office shall be responsible for the production, issuance, and replacement of certificates to graduates of the University, and:

6.5.1 Graduates of the university are required to collect their certificates in person. The certificates shall not be issued by proxy or mail.

6.5.2 The university would consider recalling/invalidating and replacement of certificates through the Academic Office when all stipulated requirements are met.

6.5.3 The university shall not consider temporary misplacement of certificate as sufficient reason for replacement.

6.5.4 If a student submits an appeal against his/her academic award; the certificate concerned shall be withheld pending the resolution of the appeal.

7.0 Policy Implementation

- 7.1 The following are steps for the recall and invalidation of certificates:
- 7.1.1 Constitution of a University Certificate Committee and appointment of Certificate Desk Officers. The Desk Officers shall be domiciled at the Academic Office. The need to ensure that staff assigned this duty shall have incontrovertible and tested integrity that shall not for any reason compromise the university standards.
 - 7.1.2 Completion and submission of a Complaint/Reissue Form by the graduands. Hard copies of the said form shall be collected from the Academic Office as well as Study Centres. It is recommended that the said form shall be uploaded on the university's website where those concerned shall easily download them and process same with Academic Office of the university.
 - 7.1.3 Retrieval of the original copy of the certificate issued.
 - 7.1.4 Verification and investigation of graduand's claim by the University Certificate Committee or Certificate Desk Officers as the case may be. The need for cautious handling of this activity cannot be over emphasised.
 - 7.1.5 For invalidated certificates, their numbers shall be clearly marked and well documented prior to their listing in the designated print-media for the attention of the public.
 - 7.1.6 All invalidated certificates shall be boldly stamped "INVALIDATED".

7.1.7 All retrieved, recalled, and invalidated certificates shall be stored for a period of one (1) year before they are destroyed.

7.2 Situations that could make a certificate eligible to be replaced.

The Committee considered the possible cases to:

7.2.1 Confirm error on the spelling of student's name with evidence.

7.2.2 Confirm error in class of degree.

7.2.3 Confirm error in date of graduation.

7.2.4 Confirm error in name of programme.

It must be confirmed that at least one of the above listed peculiarities is proven before a request for re-issue of certificate shall be considered. In each of the above-listed cases, a fresh certificate bearing the right information printed therein would be re-issued to the student.

However, it is worthy of noting that such certificates shall be signed by the current serving officers of the university and shall retain the student's approved date of graduation. Furthermore, the word "REPLACED" and the DATE it was reissued shall be boldly printed on the left-hand corner of the certificate.

7.3 The following cases shall not be considered for replacement:

7.3.1 Suspicion of forgery: If a case of forgery is established against any graduand, the certificate shall be retrieved and invalidated. Such certificates are not to be re-

issued. Rather the student shall be made to face sanctions as contained in the laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

- 7.3.2 Alteration on a certificate: A graduand who alters his certificate shall face the stipulated sanctions. The certificate shall be retrieved and invalidated and there shall be no replacement.
- 7.3.3 Concurrent Registration of more than two programmes: - Only one certificate shall be issued to graduands found to have registered for two or more programmes concurrently. The other shall be retrieved and invalidated.
- 7.3.4 Loss/theft/damage of certificate: In the event of proven loss of certificate, a certified true copy shall be issued on the notification of the loss. The name on the certificate shall be the same as contained in the University's database. The date of graduation, programme and class of degree shall remain same.
- 7.3.5 Failure of certificate verification test: The unverifiable certificates presented as the entry qualification for registration into a programme shall lead to the recall and invalidation of the certificate issued to the graduands concerned.
- 7.3.6 Presentation of certificates from unaccredited programmes/institutions.
- 7.3.7 Change of name after graduation: Certificates shall not be re-issued in the case of a student's change of name after graduation.

7.4 Steps to be adopted for the replacement of certificates.

The steps to be adopted for the replacement of certificates comprise:

- 7.4.1 Completion of a Certificate Complaint Form by the graduands. Each complainant is required to complete the designated Certificate Complaint Form.
- 7.4.2 An original copy of the duly completed form **MUST** be submitted to the Office of the Registrar. A receipt for the payment of a non-refundable processing fee of ten thousand Naira (N10,000.00) only, through Remita into the university account shall be attached to the form.
- 7.4.3 Other documents to be attached to the completed form are photocopies of:
 - 7.4.3.1 Identity Card (any of the following should be acceptable, photo page of international passport, driver's license, national identity card or voters' card),
 - 7.4.3.2 Marriage certificates,
 - 7.4.3.3 Sworn affidavit of birth/birth certificate
 - 7.4.3.4 Newspaper publication of change of name; and
 - 7.4.3.5 Any other relevant document.
- 7.4.4 A police report and affidavit sworn before a Commissioner of Oaths at a Court of competent jurisdiction shall be attached in the case of major errors.
- 7.4.5 The original certificate issued to the student must be attached to the form as the case may be.

- 7.4.6 Verification and investigation of student's claim by the University Certificate Committee or Certificate Desk Officers shall be done in liaison with the relevant faculties, and Academic Directorates. There must be a thorough investigation and confirmation of every claim by the applicant.
- 7.4.7 All completed Certificate Complaint Forms shall be forwarded to the Committee of Deans and Directors (CDD) for consideration and approval of the Senate.
- 7.4.8 All invalidated/recalled certificates shall be well documented, inclusive of the certificate numbers, and published in the designated media.

Note: The whole re-issuance/recall process; from the receipt of the completed forms to the printing of the certificates shall last between four (4) to six (6) weeks.

- 7.5 To identify possible landmarks peculiar to replaced certificates.
 - 7.5.1 The word "REPLACEMENT" shall be clearly printed/stamped on all replaced certificates. Such certificates are to be dated as and when printed.
 - 7.5.2 The serving Vice-Chancellor and Registrar are to sign replaced certificates.

8.0 Sanctions on Violating this Policy

- 8.1 Any fraudulent act or misrepresentation by any student shall attract sanctions and the certificate of such a student would be withdrawn and invalidated.

8.2 If administrative errors are found to be due to the negligence of a staff, such a staff shall be sanctioned. He/she may receive written warning, denial of three months' salaries, suspension from duty that may last one year, being release from holding administrative position as may be decided by the University Management and may have his/her job terminated. Any of these could be applied.

9.0 Policy Alignment

9.1 NOUN Open, Distance and eLearning Policy.

9.2 Keffi declaration on clarity

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